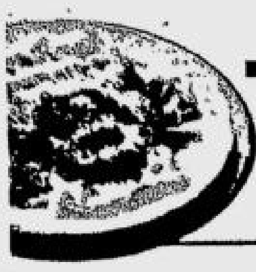

■ Lifestyle / C1
Perfect diet for people who love food

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Senate majority won't meddle in Enrile ouster

■ Business / B1
SEC dissolves Pacific Plans subsidiary

■ Across / A15
School execs say some teachers also hooked on gambling

■ Sports / A24
Suns in the dark as Spurs take 2-0 lead

Samar solon says Palparan 'friendly' but with 'no soul'

By Philip C. Tubeza and TJ Burgonio

THE ARMY officer dubbed the "Executioner of Samar" yesterday faced his critics in the House, including one who said that he feared for his life.

"If something happens to me [starting from] the coming months until the end of my term, I

SAMAR/ A6

PHILIPPINE DAILY
INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

RP police, military use torture, says Amnesty Int'l

MILITARY and police forces in the Philippines used torture and ill-treatment to extract confessions or information from scores of suspects in 2004, Amnesty International said in its annual report.

The London-based group also noted summary killings, arbitrary arrests, disappearances and torture of suspected communist

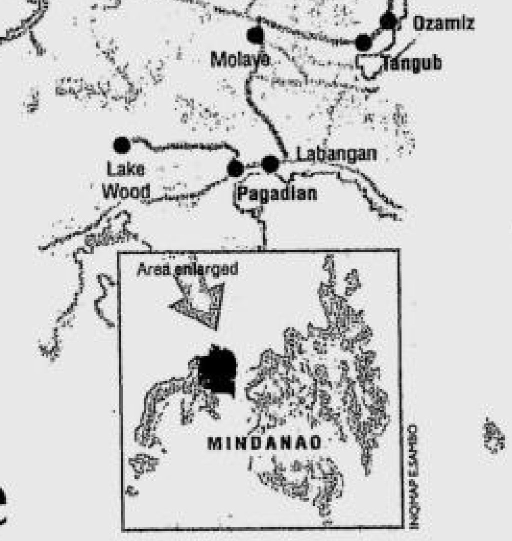
RP POLICE/ A6

@inquirer.com.ph Thursday, May 26, 2005 ★★ 52 pages / 6 sections / Vol. 20 / No. 167 P18 website: www.inq7.net

RURAL TOURS

STANDOFF at Labangon. Bishop Cabajar readies his pickup truck for three armed men and their hostages in Barangay Pulacan, Labangan, Zamboanga del Sur, on Wednesday. MICHAEL SARCAUGA

Bishop helps end hostage drama



INQMAP E.SAMBO

3 bus hijackers pursued; all 13 hostages free

By Michael Sarcauga, Julie S. Alipala, Ryan D. Rosauro and Hernan P. dela Cruz
PDI Mindanao Bureau

PAGADIAN CITY—Three armed men escaped in a pickup truck driven by a bishop after 13 hostages were freed yesterday, ending a 24-hour drama that began with the hijacking of a passenger bus.

Maj. Gen. Gabriel Habacon, commander of the 1st Infantry Division, said some of the hostages suffered cuts and bruises when they jumped off the getaway vehicle the hijackers had demanded and got after the bus ditched in Barangay Pulacan in Labangan, Zamboanga del Sur, while trying to elude pursuers.

During the negotiations that involved Pagadian Bishop Emmanuel Cabajar, the hijackers, described by police as New People's Army rebels, pledged to free the hostages in exchange for the pickup truck and safe passage.

Cabajar drove the vehicle until Lakewood town, where the armed men were let off at around 2:30 p.m. Soldiers and police were pursuing them, authorities said.

"It's an NPA-infested area," Chief Supt. Prospero Noble Jr. said.

The crisis started around 11 a.m. Tuesday when the three men armed with grenades, an Uzzi machine-gun and pistols held up the Rural Transit Bus bound

BISHOP/ A6

PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo shakes hands with Nueva Ecija Gov. Tomas Joson III in Malacañang Wednesday. At center are Bulacan Gov. Josie de la Cruz and Ilocos Sur Gov. Luis "Chavit" Singson. EDWIN BACASMAS

CONFIDENTIAL

BISHOP Oscar Cruz stops to show envelope on his way to a meeting with Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez. REM ZAMORA

Señeres finally calls it quits, slams GMA

By Jerome Aning and Christine Avendaño

THE CHAIR of the National Labor Relations Commission, Roy Señeres, finally handed in his resignation yesterday, more than a month after he was accused of involvement in a destabilization plot by President Macapagal-Arroyo.

Señeres, who had stubbornly clung to his post even after Ms Arroyo removed his administrative powers, was defiant to the end, calling for the establishment of "a new government" and urging the police and the military to rescue the Filipino people from the "clear and present evil" of massive corruption.

"It's clear as the light of day that the present government has already exceeded in destructiveness. It is now time to alter and abolish it, and for us to institute a

SEÑERES/ A8

PNP declares Metro, 2 more regions 'jueteng' free

By Luige A. del Puerto, Norman Bordadora and Armand N. Nocum

TWO MORE regions in Luzon were yesterday declared "jueteng" free by Philippine National Police Director General Arturo Lomibao.

He told radio dzBB that Region IV-B or Mimaropa (Mindoro, Marinduque, Romblon and Palawan) and CAR (Cordillera Administrative Region) have been cleared of the illegal numbers game in addition to Regions I (Ilocos), II (Cagayan Valley), and III (Central Luzon). He later confirmed this in a text message to the INQUIRER.

Director Vidal Querol of the National Capital

PNP/ A8

No proof against GMA, says bishop

LINGAYEN-DAGUPAN Archbishop Oscar Cruz yesterday said he was willing to give President Macapagal-Arroyo the benefit of the doubt as regards her announcement that she had not received a centavo of jueteng money.

"I will believe what she says because I have no proof that she has

NO PROOF/ A8

Oil firms lower gas prices

By Abigail L. Ho

AS WORLD petroleum prices continue to decline, oil firms yesterday slashed gasoline prices by 50 to 55 centavos a liter and diesel and kerosene prices by 30 to 35 centavos a liter.

The first to implement the rollback was independent oil firm Eastern Petroleum Corp., which reduced the prices of gasoline by 50 centavos a liter and of diesel and kerosene by 30 centavos a liter at 12:01 a.m.

Over the next 12 hours, all the other oil companies began rolling back petroleum product prices one after the other.

They all cited the continued softening of world oil prices and competitive market forces as the reasons for the rollback.

Energy Undersecretary Peter Anthony Abaya said consumers could expect more price rollbacks next month if the current international price trend is sustained.

Flying V announced its cutbacks at 6 a.m., cutting prices of the same products by the same levels as Eastern Petroleum.

Oil refiner Pilipinas Shell Petroleum Corp. and Seaoil Petroleum Corp. followed an hour later. Shell slashed the prices of the gasoline by 50 centavos a liter, and of diesel and kerosene by 30 centavos a liter.

OIL FIRMS/ A7

LAGOT ANG MGA YOSI KADIRI!

Holy smoke! Smoking deemed an act of terror

By Norman Bordadora

A PERSON smoking in a closed public space may be liable under a consolidated antiterror bill being deliberated in the House of Representatives, a critic of the measure said.

Law professor Pacifico Agabin, a former dean of the UP College of Law, said the smoker would not only be violating the antismoking law but will also be committing an act of terror. He

HOLY/ A7

WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: Northern and Central Luzon will experience cloudy skies with rains. Mindanao will experience mostly cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers and thunderstorms. The rest of the country will have partly cloudy to cloudy skies with isolated rainshowers or thunderstorms mostly in the afternoon or evening.

COMPILED BY: CYRIL L. BONABENTE, PDI RESEARCH/05/26/05 SOURCE: PAGASA

Metro Manila	Cloudy with Rains	Iloilo/Bacolod	Partly Cloudy
Baguio	Cloudy with Rains	Roxas	Partly Cloudy
Tuguegarao	Cloudy with Rains	Cebu	Partly Cloudy
Laoag	Cloudy with Rains	Tacloban	Partly Cloudy
Clark Zone	Cloudy with Rains	Gen. Santos	Cloudy with Rains
Tagaytay	Partly Cloudy	Zamboanga	Cloudy with Rains
Legazpi	Partly Cloudy	Cagayan de Oro	Cloudy with Rains
Calapan	Partly Cloudy	Davao	Cloudy with Rains

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Second FRONTPAGE

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Nora Aunor hearing moved to June 27

LOS ANGELES—A Los Angeles judge has postponed the preliminary hearing of Nora Aunor's drug possession case from May 26 to June 27, according to Aunor's defense lawyer.

Aunor had pleaded not guilty to the charge before Los Angeles Superior Court Judge Paula Adele Maybrey last April 21 at the Los Angeles Airport Courthouse.

The Filipino actress' lawyer, Claire Espina of the Edelberg and Espina law office, said Judge Maybrey also granted three motions for evidence split, for the waiver of appearance by the defendant except for trial and other evidentiary hearings, and for a Tagalog interpreter at all hearings.

"We were also granted the request to have her personal appearance waived while discovery is ongoing and except when testimony is required," Espina said. "She is required to appear, though, at the next date in June."

Espina also explained that "if and when the preliminary hearing takes place, it should take no more than a couple of hours as the police officers will likely do this under Proposition 115."

Proposition 115, also known as the Crime Victims' Justice Reform Act in 1990, affirms that in criminal cases, the people of the State of California have "the right to due process of law and to a speedy and public trial."

The case against Aunor stemmed from her arrest at the Los Angeles International Airport on March 30 for alleged possession of eight grams of methamphetamine hydrochloride (shabu). *Janet Susan R. Nepales, LA Correspondent*

Senate majority won't meddle in Enrile ouster

By TJ Burgonio

FEARING it would set a bad precedent, the Senate majority yesterday opted to distance themselves from a move by the minority bloc to oust Sen. Juan Ponce Enrile from the Commission on Appointments.

Senate President Franklin Drilon maintained that Enrile's continued membership in the influential body should be resolved by the minority bloc headed by Sen. Aquilino Pimentel Jr.

"That is a matter for the minority to decide. The membership of the minority in the Commission on Appointments is a matter settled by the minority. How they settle it, the majority does not interfere," he said.

Senate Majority Leader Francis Pangilinan said that it would set a bad precedent if the majority would decide on "a dispute that is internal [to the minority bloc]."

"It might happen that one day I'll be in the minority. I don't want the majority asking the minority how to run our affairs. That's the bad precedent. It's something that we will not welcome," he said.

Dropping JPE

In a surprise move, Pimentel manifested on the floor on Tuesday that he, Sergio Osmeña III, Panfilo "Ping" Lacson, Jinggoy Estrada, Luisa "Loi" Ejercito, Alfredo Lim and Jamby Madrigal had agreed to drop Enrile from the body.

They claimed that Enrile had been supporting the nomination of Malacañang appointees at the CA hearings, contrary to his role as minority leader in the body, claims denied by Enrile.

But Enrile ignored his colleagues in the opposition and showed up at the resumption of the confirmation hearing of Local Government Secretary Angelo Reyes before the CA.

Pangilinan, however, said that if the controversy resulted in an impasse, the chamber would have no recourse but to put the matter to a vote. The issue, however, was not tackled on the floor in yesterday's session.

Drilon, who also chairs the CA, said that anybody could go to the court to seek interpretation of the constitutional provision, which Enrile said lays down the rules for a lawmaker's nomination to the CA.

Salvaging the situation

Lacson and Osmeña had sought the chamber's intervention on the matter.

Lacson, however, said he was open to holding another caucus among opposition senators to "reconsider" its earlier decision to drop Enrile from the CA and "salvage the situation."

Other opposition senators sitting on the CA are Lacson, Osmeña, Angara and Ejercito.

But Pimentel maintained that the decision was final and the majority's concurrence was a mere formality. "We will push for its resolution. When? I don't know. Tomorrow, today, next week... If it's resolved today, it's fine with me. If not, it's also fine with me."

Reacting to Lacson's view that the opposition was now "in tatters," he said: "We are alive and kicking. We just underwent a cancer operation. It was successful. The opposition is now undergoing chemotherapy."

Hours earlier, Enrile casually walked into the hearing of the CA committee on local government at around 11 a.m. while Osmeña was grilling officials of the Commission on Audit on the AFP modernization fund in connection with Reyes' confirmation.

He sat next to Lacson and a seat away from Osmeña. Also at the hearing was Angara.

Come and get me

Enrile insisted that his membership in the influential body was based on his affiliation with the Koalisyon ng Nagkakaisang Pilipino (KNP), and not with the Senate minority headed by Sen. Aquilino Pimentel Jr.

"If they want to remove me as minority floor leader in the CA, let them. They can have it. But they cannot deprive me of my membership; they don't have the right or power nor prerogative. Only my party can remove me," he told reporters.

Osmeña said they would leave it to the Senate to decide whether to amend the current rules for nominating members to the body.

"If the Senate decides that we will go by party, the KNP is free to choose JPE to be their member," he said, recalling that last year, nominations were based on senators' affiliation with the majority or minority blocs since some did not have any party.

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RP still on CIA list of drug exporters

By Nikko Dizon

THE PHILIPPINES continues to be exporter of marijuana and hashish to various parts of the world, and serves as a transit point for heroin and shabu, according to the updated World Factbook of the United States Central Intelligence Agency (CIA).

"(The Philippines) exports locally produced marijuana and hashish to East Asia, the US, and other Western markets (and) serves as a transit point for heroin and crystal methamphetamine (shabu)," the American spy agency said in the fact book which was last updated on May 17.

The CIA added that domestic production of methamphetamine "is a growing problem."

The information is posted on the CIA website, www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook.

Curiously, the fact book still mentions that the Philippines remains on the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) Non-Cooperative Countries and Territories List "for continued failure to address deficiencies in money-laundering control regime" even as the 2005 International Narcotics Control Strategy Report (INCSR), released by the Bureau for International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs last March, notes that the Philippines has already been taken out of the list.

The INCSR is an annual report by the Department of State to the US Congress in accordance with the Foreign Assistance Act.

The 2005 report describes the efforts of key countries in addressing all aspects of the international drug trade in 2004.

The INCSR said that the Philippines "produces, consumes and exports marijuana," the cultivation of which is generally in areas inaccessible to vehicles and/or controlled by insurgent groups.

It noted that authorities are having difficulties stemming marijuana production.

Corruption and inefficiency among government officials are stumbling blocks in the eradication efforts, the report said.

While the marijuana produced in the Philippines is for local consumption, the report said that the remainder of the illegal drug is smuggled to Australia, Japan, Malaysia, Taiwan, and Europe.

The INSCR also said that the Philippines is a major producer of 'crystal methamphetamine and took note of evidence indicating "some links between terrorist organizations and drug trafficking."

The report said the recent raid of local authorities of a shabu "mega-lab" in Cebu "highlighted the Philippines' transition into a major methamphetamine producer and the role of transnational criminal group in production."

GMA vows no price hike in school supplies

PRESIDENT Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo assured the public yesterday that prices of school supplies would not go up for the rest of the year.

"A notebook costs 8.50 [pesos]. It will remain at 8.50 until the end of the year," Arroyo said in a speech following a tour of bargain shops in Manila's Divisoria district.

The President said the price of Mongol brand pencils had stayed at P4 for three years. The price of Crayola brand crayons likewise remained unchanged for three years, she added.

She also advised the public not to go to the malls if they wanted to save on school supplies.

"At the malls, which are for the rich, a notebook costs P11 pesos. We can't expect low prices there," she said.

Amid rising consumer prices and ahead of the opening of classes, Arroyo ordered a tuition freeze in state colleges and universities and fares at the Metro Rail Transit (MRT).

She also ordered the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) to ensure that prices of school supplies would not go up. *Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.*

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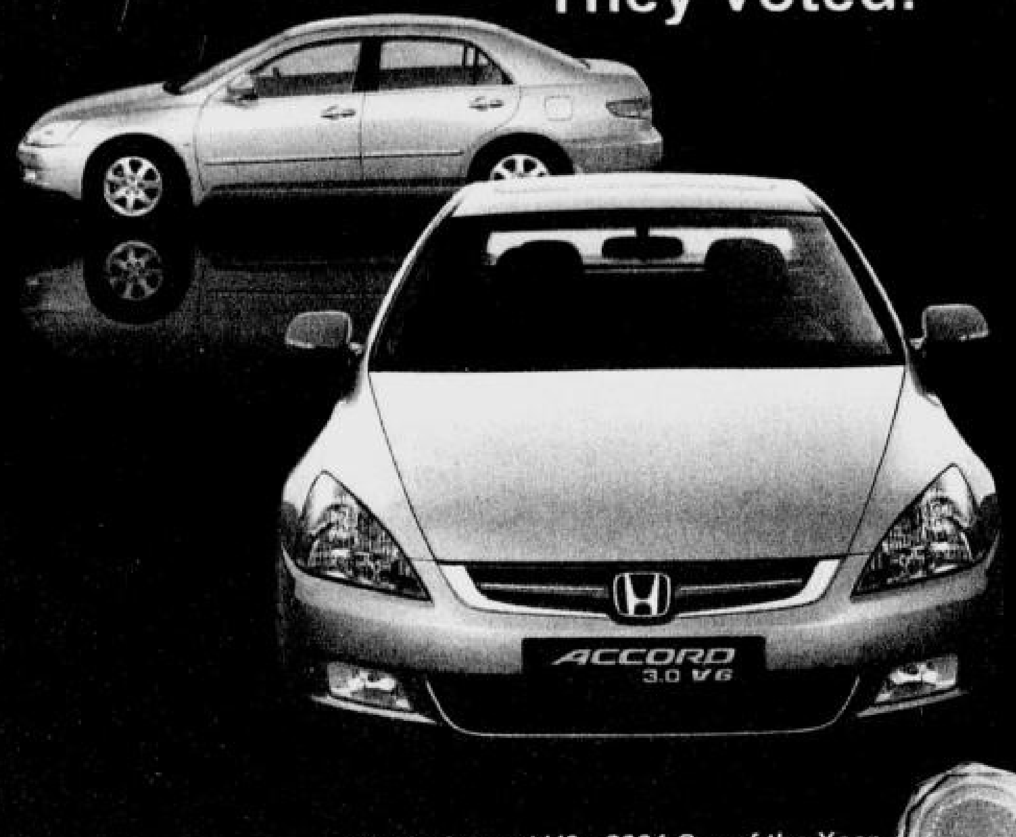

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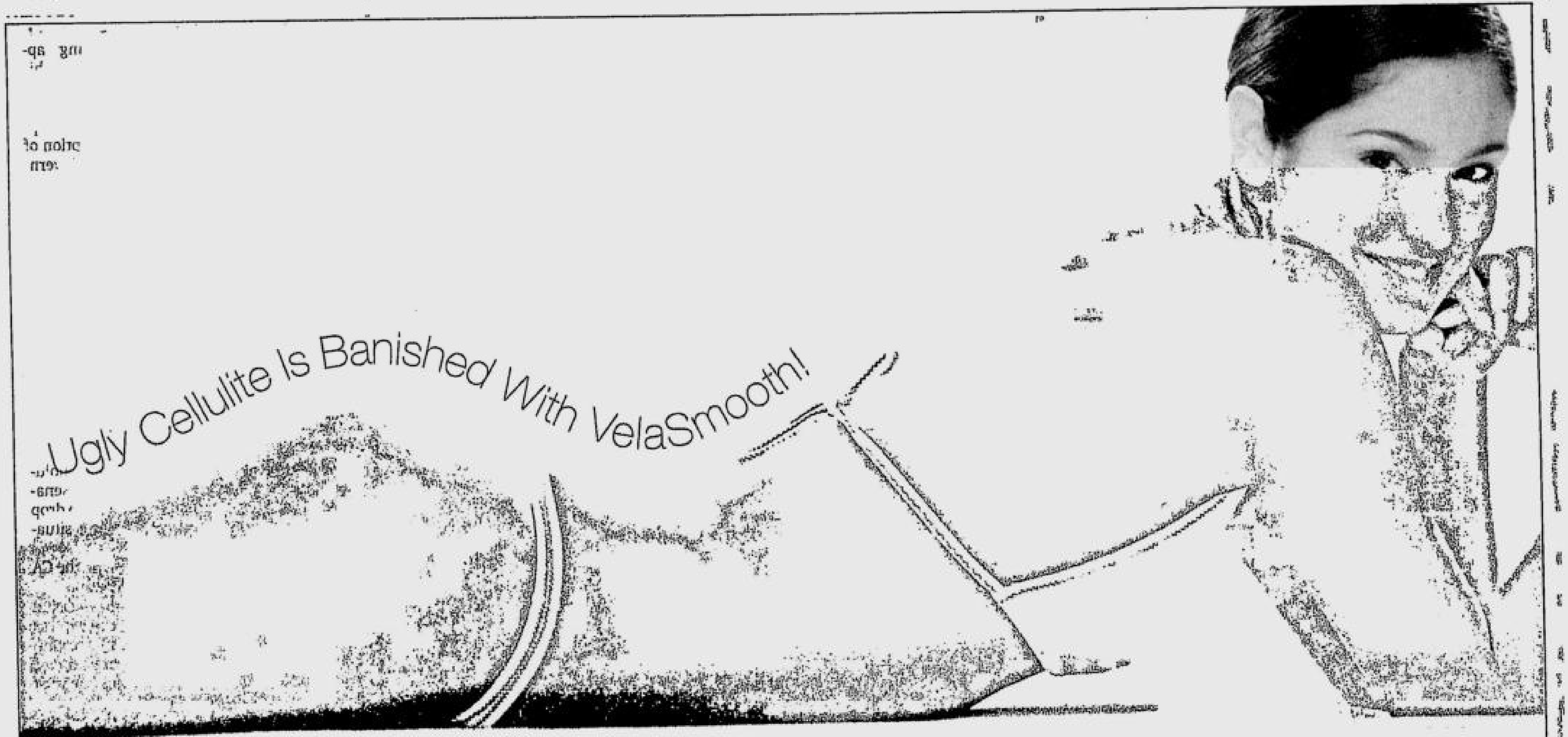

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World Bank hails VAT law, offers $2-B credit

By Michelle V. Remo and Gil C. Cabacungan

THE WORLD Bank, the multilateral agency that is one of biggest source of loans for the country, has hailed the signing of the value-added tax law, and has offered the Philippines $2 billion worth of credit over the next three years as an expression of appreciation.

"With this law, the Philippines has moved its fiscal reform program from plans and announcements into the implementation phase. This will make a big contribution to the fiscal turnaround if it is fully and effectively implemented," said Joachim von Amsberg, the World Bank country director for the Philippines.

The expanded VAT law is the Arroyo administration's key revenue-raising measure to solve the budget deficit.

The revenues will come from the lifting of several VAT exemptions previously enjoyed by certain sectors, such as oil and electric power, and the raising of the corporate income tax rate from 32 to 35 percent.

Revenues are also to be expected from the standby authority given by Congress to President Macapagal-Arroyo to raise the VAT rate from 10 to 12 percent next year.

Economic policy officials see the implementation of the VAT law as improving the country's credit image, as it would allow the government to access loans more easily and with lower interest rates.

"Like any other borrower, the Philippines should be able to access more credit if it improves its fiscal situation because creditors will be more confident in lending to the country," said Socio-Economic Planning Secretary Romulo Neri.

The estimated $2 billion that the WB is willing to lend to the Philippines would finance the country's development programs until 2008, the bank said.

It said the amount, which would be lent over the next three years, was much bigger than the average annual assistance of only $100 million the WB was previously giving the Philippines.

Von Amsberg said the higher amount was because the government was likely to achieve its fiscal targets with the passage of the VAT law.

According to Vipul Bhagat, country manager of the International Finance Corp., the World Bank's financing arm, the financial assistance would focus on four areas—the financial sector, infrastructure, small and medium enterprises (SMEs) and mining.

The government's target is to wipe out the budget deficit on or before 2010, the end of Ms Arroyo's term.

The deficit stood at P187 billion last year and is expected to be trimmed down to P151 billion this year because of the passage of the revenue-raising measures.

Malacañang yesterday pleaded with opponents of the new VAT law to give the measure at least two months to prove its beneficial effects.

"We have to find out and give it a test period of two months to determine whether the issues and concerns of demonstrators are valid," said Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita.

Activist groups and non-government organizations have threatened to hold protest actions against the imposition of the higher VAT on commodities and services.

The expanded VAT law, or RA 9337, takes effect on July 1 and is expected to generate a modest P28.75 billion for the remaining months of 2005.

The full impact of the VAT, or revenues of between P105.23 billion and P190.11 billion, will not be felt starting next year when the President can exercise a stand-by authority to raise the VAT rate from 10 percent to 12 percent.

Back to old work sked for gov't men

By Christine O. Avendaño

IT'S BACK to the old work schedule for government employees.

National government employees are expected to resume their usual five-day work-week schedule starting May 30, in time for the opening of classes in June.

Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita said yesterday his office has already sent President Macapagal-Arroyo an administrative order for her approval that would instruct the resumption of the five-day workweek for all national government employees.

Since April, national government employees have been enjoying a four-day workweek scheme that was implemented to help government save on energy and power costs, which normally rise during the hot days of summer.

This scheme was implemented through administration order No. 117 and was supposed to run from April 5 until May 31.

Ermita said that the four-day workweek scheme was successful in terms of cutting down energy costs for government.

"However, much as we wished to continue it since the opening of classes will be in June, we need the entire force of government to be on hand to help in preparing for the opening of classes," he said.

COMMITMENT TO FIL-AMS

No stopping Mikey's US trip

By Michael Lim Ubac

NO AMOUNT of protests by colleagues will stop Pampanga Rep. Juan Miguel "Mikey" Arroyo from flying to the United States next week.

"I gave my word to them as far back as last November that I would be there with them for the Philippine Independence Day celebrations to likewise give them our full support," said the eldest son of President Macapagal-Arroyo.

He reiterated that he was "duty-bound to fulfill my commitment" to visit and participate in the activities of Filipino-American groups in the US, "who have been very supportive of our country without any regard to politics."

Arroyo was invited by the Filipino American Council of Greater Chicago, one of the largest Fil-Am groups in the Eastern United States, to hold a series of meetings with Fil-Ams as early as November last year.

Sensing that Rep. Arroyo was all set to "don running shoes," Bayan Muna party-list Reps. Satur Ocampo, Teddy Casino and Joel Virador appealed to Ms Arroyo to stop her son from leaving town, lest it is said that the flight was a "family decision" to "buy time, let the heat subside and come back with all the excuses they could find."

In a joint statement, the three lawmakers said Malacañang could not convince anyone that the departure of First Gentleman Jose Miguel "Mike" Arroyo last week and his son's forthcoming US visit were not scripted.

They said the two Arroyos had lost the "sense of propriety" to forgo the US visit so that they could face the accusation by two jueteng bagmen and a jueteng operator that they had received jueteng money.

Rep. Arroyo, for his part, denied he was leaving for the US to evade the investigation of two chambers of Congress on the jueteng scandal.

He reiterated that he was open to an investigation on his alleged involvement in jueteng to be conducted by either House of Representatives or by the authorities, even if the controversy was "a concoction by the opposition in an attempt to derail the country's progress under the Arroyo administration."

He appealed to his fellow politicians "to embrace the spirit of selflessness of our overseas Filipinos who have helped keep the country afloat regardless of political personalities or regime. In a very real sense, the Filipino overseas are our heroes and we should not shirk from any opportunity to be one with them."

But the beleaguered father and son found an ally in the pro-administration Kabalikat ng Malayang Pilipino (Kampi) that accused Senators Aquilino Pimentel Jr., Panfilo Lacson and Manuel "Lito" Lapid of being "wrong champions for the anti-jueteng drive."

"They are representing themselves as anti-jueteng crusaders, yet they have anti-jueteng records they cannot be proud of," said Antipolo Rep. Ronaldo Puno.

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Master Square Department Store • Bookshop Center • Cagayan Educational Supply
Valuepoint Superstores

Brillantes is new envoy to Canada

By Nikko Dizon

FOREIGN Secretary Alberto Romulo congratulated yesterday the 61 newly confirmed ambassadors, career ministers, and foreign service officers of the Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA) led by Undersecretary Jose Brillantes, who has been appointed as the country's new ambassador to Canada.

"We look forward to greater dynamism on the Department as these new officers take on new responsibilities," Romulo said in a statement.

The group paid Romulo a courtesy call in his DFA office after their confirmation at the Senate.

Ambassador to Papua New Guinea Bienvenido Tejano is now the new Philippine ambassador to New Zealand with concurrent jurisdiction over the Republic of Fiji, the Kingdom of Tonga, and the Independent State of Samoa.

THE DAILY GOSPEL

Thursday, May 26, 2005
8th Week in Ordinary Time

1st Reading: Sir 42:15-25
Gospel: Mark 10:46-52

As Jesus was leaving Jericho with his disciples and a large crowd, a blind beggar, Bartimaeus, the son of Timaeus, was sitting by the roadside. On hearing that it was Jesus of Nazareth passing by, he began to call out, "Son of David, Jesus, have mercy on me!" Many people scolded him and told him to keep quiet, but he shouted all the louder, "Son of David, have mercy on me!"

Jesus stopped and said, "Call him." So they called the blind man saying, "Take heart. Get up, he is calling you." He immediately threw aside his cloak, jumped up and went to Jesus.

Then Jesus asked him, "What do you want me to do for you?" The blind man said, "Master, let me see again!" And Jesus said to him, "Go your way, your faith has made you well." And immediately he could see, and he followed Jesus along the road.

Commentary

Now they come to Jericho and the road is crowded. A blind beggar hears that it is Jesus and desperately cries out: "Son of David, Jesus have mercy on me." And he won't be shut up, not by the crowd, or even by the disciples who are hurrying Jesus away from people and the incessant cries for help. But Jesus stops and calls him over and he throws off his cloak, runs, blind! And naked! And Jesus rather oddly asks him what he wants-he wants to be able to see again! The word 'again' is crucial. He wasn't always blind! He is given back his sight and he begins to follow Jesus up the road, on his way to Jerusalem. He immediately becomes a follower! This is what we are to do, if we have listened to all these readings this past week-we are to cry out for faith, drop what hinders us from getting nearer to Jesus, run, even blind and ask to see again-with grace and the light of the Gospel, and follow Jesus on his way of the cross. This is what Peter and the Disciples should be doing-what we should be doing. Are we?

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'IF IT DOESN'T FIT...'

Saguisag quotes OJ lawyer's line in defense of Erap

By Nelson F. Flores

IF IT doesn't fit, you must acquit.

Thus said Rene Saguisag, lawyer of deposed President Joseph Estrada, during yesterday's inspection at the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas to prove that P130 million in cash could not fit into the four boxes which Charlie "Atong" Ang allegedly used to carry the said amount to the former president in 1998.

Saguisag was quoting the famous declaration of O.J. Simpson's lead counsel Johnnie Cochran Jr. during the 1995 trial of the football star that Simpson's hands couldn't fit inside the blood-stained glove found at the scene of the crime. Simpson was thus acquitted for the 1994 murder of his ex-wife and her acquaintance.

Saguisag said the ocular inspection proved that a box, 12" in width, 10" in height and 15" in length, similar to what was allegedly used by Ang to deliver the cash to Estrada at his San Juan residence, could only contain 20 bundles of cash with each bundle containing P1 million.

He pointed out that if four boxes were indeed used in the delivery as claimed by the prosecution then only total of P80 million were actually delivered and not P130 million as stated in the complaint sheet.

"We, however, would like to clarify that Estrada did not receive a single centavo from the tobacco excise tax as alleged by Ilocos Sur Gov. Luis "Chavit" Singson and that the purpose of this ocular inspection is only to prove the impossibility of his claim," Saguisag stressed.

Saguisag said the prosecution panel should "stop assaulting and insulting our intelligence." He added that one does this kind of deliveries privately at midnight or in the early morning.

"You don't do that in a very public place like the residence of Estrada which is always full of people and security personnel," Saguisag explained.

In his sworn statement, Singson said that on the afternoon of Aug. 31, 1998 Ang, Estrada's gambling buddy, left him at the corner of Buchanan and Polk streets some 112 meters away from Estrada's residence, as they delivered the P130 million alleged kickbacks to the former president in four boxes. He said he later followed Ang into Estrada's residence.

Lawyer Jose Flaminiano said the ocular inspection is a major victory for the defense panel. He said charges that Estrada received P130 million as kickbacks from the tobacco excise tax could not hold water in the light of the result of the ocular inspection.

However, Special Prosecutor Dennis Villa-Ignacio had a different view.

Correction

IN YESTERDAY'S issue, a front-page story—"DOJ says witness has evidence against governor"—misstated that "Bataan Gov. Pablo Roman's son, Tonton, was also accused of turning over to the First Gentleman P500,000 in jueteng money."

Businessman Pablo "Tonton" Roman III earlier said the late Pablo Roman was not a governor but a congressman of Bataan.

Tonton Roman said he was not a son but a grandson of the late congressman, his father being Victor Roman.

He also denied that his family had ever engaged in jueteng, or that he had ever acted as bagman for any member of the First Family.

* * *

Readers may send their requests for correction of factual errors in writing to Gerry Lirio, city editor, Philippine Daily Inquirer, PDI Building, Chino Roces Avenue corner Mascardo Street, Makati City; fax Nos. 897-4793/94; e-mail addresses: glirio@inquirer.com.ph and daydesk@inquirer.com.ph.

Complaints about lack of fairness or objectivity may be sent, pending the appointment of a new readers' advocate, to Isagani Yambot, publisher, the same address and fax numbers as those of the city editor, and e-mail address: iyambot@inquirer.com.ph.

Sandigan junks Garcia motion to merge cases

By Nelson F. Flores

THE SANDIGANBAYAN yesterday junked a motion of retired armed forces comptroller Maj. Gen. Carlos Garcia seeking to consolidate the forfeiture proceedings against his assets and the plunder case filed against him.

The members of the antigraft court's Fourth Division presided over by Justice Gregory Ong held that incorporating the forfeiture suit with the non-bailable plunder case, which is punishable with death, is improper since Garcia was already declared in default in the former.

In a nine-page resolution, Associate Justice Jose Hernandez, a member of the Fourth Division, said, "To allow consolidation of the two cases would virtually nullify order of default against the Garcias since they would be allowed to participate in the presentation of evidence."

The anti-graft court further noted that bringing the two cases together would only unnecessarily delay the proceedings in the forfeiture case because the plunder case in the second division has yet to start, and has not yet even issued any warrant of arrest for the defendants.

"The forfeiture case will also be unduly delayed by the consolidation. The present case should end after the government rests its case since the Garcias have already been declared in default," the court ruled.

Moreover, the Sandiganbayan stressed that forfeiture cases "may be tried separately and proceed independently of any criminal proceedings."

Garcia, his wife Clarita and sons Ian Carl, Juan Paolo and Timothy Mark were declared in default for delaying the proceedings concerning their alleged ill-gotten wealth.

The Garcias were charged with plunder for allegedly illegally amassing wealth worth more than P303 million.

Except for Garcia, who is detained, and his wife who is reportedly in the country, the rest of the accused were reportedly in the United States.

Since plunder is a capital offense that carries the maximum penalty of death, the government prosecutors did not recommend bail for the temporary liberty of any member of the Garcia family.

Ombudsman Simeon Marcelo said the investigation conducted by his office showed that Garcia, in connivance with the members of his family, did "willfully, unlawfully and criminally amass, accumulate and acquire ill-gotten wealth in the form of funds, landholdings and other real and personal properties in the aggregate amount of P303,272,005.99."

He added the illegal accumulation of wealth was committed in conspiracy with the help of his family and several other still unidentified persons "through a series and/or combination of overt or criminal acts or similar schemes or means, by receiving commissions, gifts, shares, percentages, kickbacks or other forms of pecuniary benefits like shopping money or gratitude money."

Villa-Ignacio explained that Garcia's wife and children were named in the case because most of the properties amassed by the retired general were under their names. He added that it was impossible that they were not aware of what [Garcia] was doing.

AFP set to release Garcia to Sandigan

By Dona Pazzibugan

THE ARMED Forces will turn over retired Maj. Gen. Carlos Garcia to the Sandiganbayan once the antigraft court issues a warrant of arrest, the military said Tuesday.

The Ombudsman last month charged the former chief comptroller of the Armed Forces of the Philippines with plunder for allegedly amassing at least P303 million in unexplained wealth while in office.

Garcia is detained at the Intelligence Services of the AFP (Isafp) compound in Camp Aguinaldo since he is being tried by a court-martial.

AFP Chief of Staff Gen. Efren Abu has reportedly instructed the Provost Marshal, Col. Henry Galarpe, to "facilitate the immediate turnover" of Garcia to the Ombudsman once the arrest warrant is served.

"The AFP would follow whatever the order of the court is. Wherever he may be detained, the Armed Forces has nothing to do with that anymore," said Lt. Col. Buenaventura Pascual, AFP public information chief.

The Ombudsman has been asking the antigraft court to issue an arrest warrant to prevent Garcia's possible escape.

Plunder is a non-bailable offense and is punishable by death.

Garcia had earlier been charged with perjury in the Sandiganbayan for allegedly failing to divulge all his income and assets, but has remained in detention at the Isafp compound.

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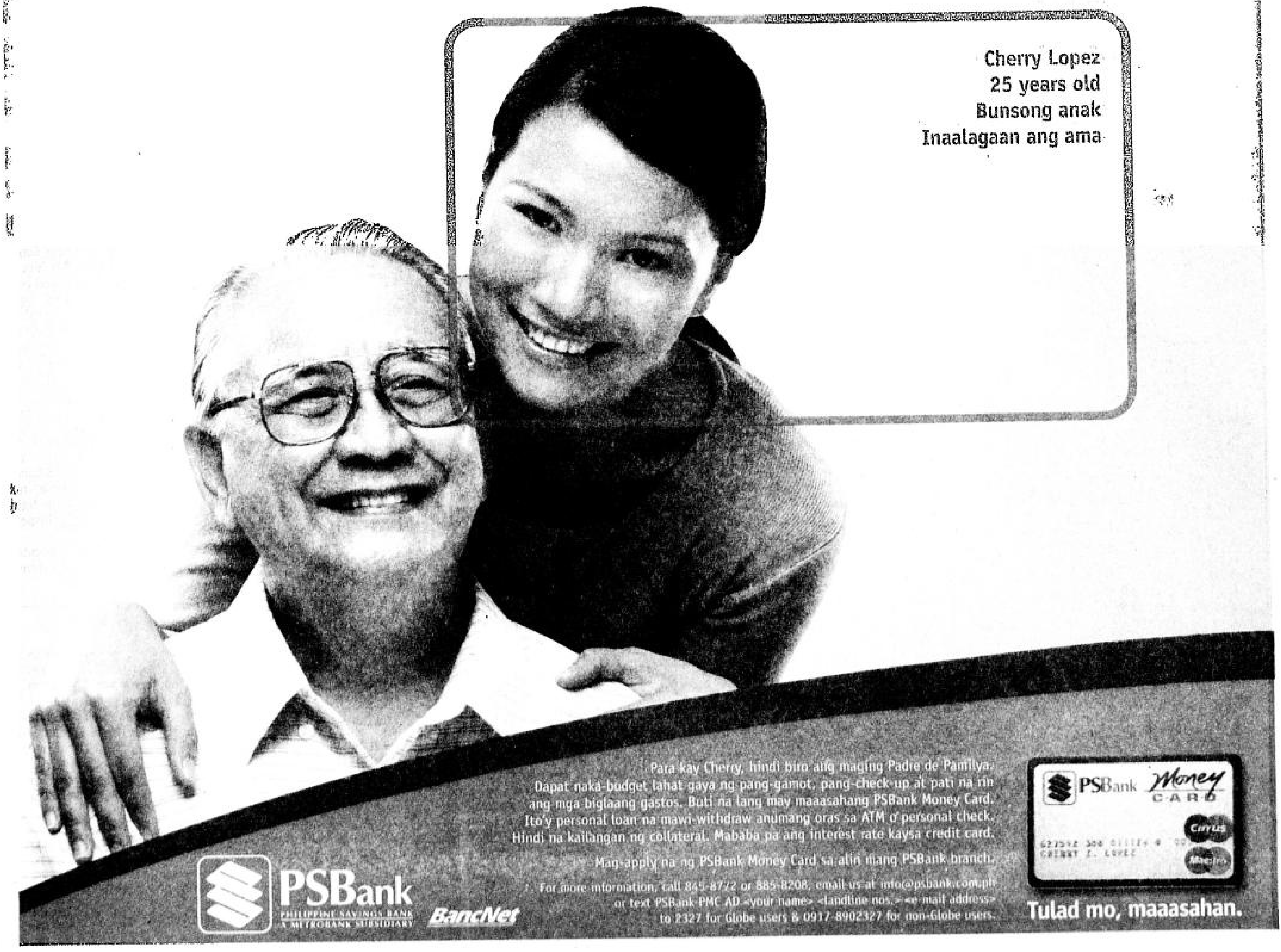

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Bishop helps end hostage drama

From page A1

for Zamboanga City. The bus driver, Leopoldo Cabagtulan, said the gunmen boarded the bus as it was leaving Plaridel, Misamis Occidental.

As the bus reached a mobile police checkpoint at Sapang Dalaga, set up a day before following a robbery, police ordered the male passengers to disembark. One of the gunmen fired three shots, warned police against getting on the bus and threatened to blow up the vehicle with the passengers, said Misamis Occidental Gov. Loreto Ocampos.

Officials immediately began negotiations with the gunmen, led by a certain Junjun, resulting in the release after five hours of 5-year-old Ella Ulga, who had just been treated at a hospital. She was set free in exchange for Cabagtulan who was to drive them back to the south.

"The understanding was that they would be allowed to escape along the way," Ocampos said.

Ocampos said that he was surprised when after two hours, he learned that the bus was in Tangub City and was proceeding to Pagadian.

Ocampos said that when the bus was passing by Molave in Zambonga del Sur on Tuesday evening, policemen tried to stop it by firing shots. One of the passengers was injured when a bullet tore one of the glass windows.

The driver was ordered to continue even though one of his tires was hit.

Yanga said the bus hit a concrete wall at Labangan near the Army's 1st Infantry Division.

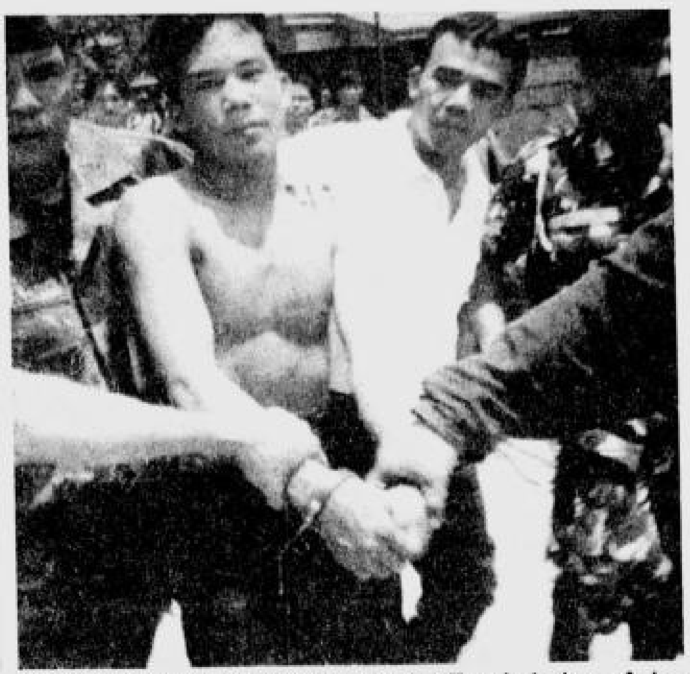
There, authorities continued with the negotiations. The gunmen released Dureza Plaza, secretary to Gov. Rolando Yebes of Zamboanga del Norte, and another unidentified hostage. The driver escaped on Tuesday evening.

At about this time only 13 hostages remained, including three children.

Police negotiators decided to involve Bishop Cabajar in the negotiations.

At 11 a.m. yesterday, one of the hostages, identified as Aris Tan of Salug, Zamboanga del Norte, managed to escape through the driver's window as the gunmen were busy in the negotiations.

CABAJAR: Pagadian bishops breaks hostage standoff. MICHAEL SARCAUGA



SOLDIERS escort and handcuff hostage Aris Tan who in the confusion was mistaken for one of the armed bus hijackers. MICHAEL SARCAUGA

"You promised to give us car, please help us. Have you no pity on us?" a girl hostage said as negotiations went on.

When a vehicle was finally found, negotiators faced another problem because no driver was willing to take the job.

Cabajar then agreed to drive the hijackers using his service vehicle, a white Isuzu Fuego pickup.

But before proceeding, Cabajar asked assurance from authorities that they would not stop him and the hijackers.

Presidential Assistant for Western Mindanao Renato Ebarle told the INQUIRER it was the best thing they could do to avoid bloodshed.

"The tension was relieved as the hijackers' behavior was suicidal because of lack of sleep, stress and anxiety," Ebarle said.

The men then took the hostages to the prelate's truck but agreed to leave behind the hostage who was injured in Molave. At Dumalinao town, five hostages were allowed to go.

Two other hostages jumped off the vehicle while en route to Lakewood town.

At the junction road between Tigbao and Lakewood, the four remaining passengers escaped, leaving the bishop and the hostage-takers behind.

Police said the gunmen then asked Cabajar to drop them off a road leading to Bayog town in Zamboanga del Norte. *With a report from AP*

RP police, military use torture, says Amnesty Int'l

From page A1

rebels and members of legal left-wing organizations. It said the justice system was hampered by "serious defects."

"Despite an extensive array of institutions and procedural safeguards, suspected perpetrators of serious human rights violations were rarely brought to justice," Amnesty reported.

People who tried to bring rights abuses to the courts faced "prolonged and frequently unfair trial proceedings" that were often abandoned in frustration, the report said.

Moro separatist rebels and communist guerrillas were also accused of rights abuses.

Amnesty said at least 14 of the Philippines' 1,110 death row inmates faced execution even though they were sentenced for offenses committed when they were younger than 18 and executing child offenders was banned.

Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez conceded there were "plenty of human rights problems" in the Philippines, but said that most of them stemmed from a lack of resources.

"This government wants to do its best to observe human rights . . . but we just cannot meet all of these" obligations, Gonzalez said.

The Philippine National Police also acknowledged there might have been "a few isolated cases" of human rights violations perpetrated by policemen.

But PNP spokesperson Senior Supt. Leopoldo Bataoil said the top brass did not condone tortures, summary killings and arbitrary arrests.

"The PNP does not tolerate maltreatment of suspects. We forcefully indoctrinate our men on human rights. This subject is taught (to cops) in all our training institutions," Bataoil said.

"We continue to improve on our record," he added.

The Armed Forces of the Philippines, however, said Amnesty must have based its report on "one-sided" sources. AFP spokesperson Brig. Gen. Jose Angel said no less than President Macapagal-Arroyo last year praised the AFP for its "good record" on human rights.

Trampled

Human rights were trampled last year not only in the Philippines but across Asia by governments and armed rebel groups, according to Amnesty.

People were jailed indefinitely without trial in Malaysia and Singapore, religious minorities were persecuted in China and Vietnam and security forces committed extra-judicial killings in Nepal, Thailand and Indonesia, the London-based watchdog group said in its 2004 annual report.

"In 2004, we saw that governments betrayed their promises and sold out their people," Si-si Liu, chair of Amnesty International Hong Kong, told a news conference in Kuala Lumpur.

Women were the major focus of Amnesty's latest report card on the state of human rights around the world. Women reportedly suffered violence and systematic discrimination ranging from acid attacks in Bangladesh to forced abortion in China, rape by soldiers in Nepal and domestic beatings in Australia.

While Amnesty reported moderate improvements in the protection of rights in some countries, the list of places where rights deteriorated was much longer.

In North Korea, people starved because of a food crisis, and radio and television sets were tuned to receive only state broadcasts. In Burma (Myanmar), the ruling generals continued to deny democracy despite promising reforms, Amnesty said.

Extrajudicial executions, arbitrary detention, torture, sexual violence and destruction of property continued to be reported in Indonesia and Nepal, and politically motivated killings rose dramatically in Sri Lanka.

"The rule of law means nothing" in Nepal, said Rob Godden, Amnesty's regional campaign coordinator, at the news conference.

Summary of abuses

Following are summaries of rights abuses alleged by Amnesty in Asian countries:

- Afghanistan: Although Afghanistan has a new Constitution that guarantees gender equality, women still faced widespread discrimination. Hundreds of women set fire to themselves to escape violence at home and forced marriage. Rape, forced marriage and the exchange of girls to settle disputes were frequently not treated as crimes. There is some evidence that US forces tortured and ill-treated detainees.
- China: China continued to use the threat of terrorism to justify its crackdown on the minority Muslim Uighurs, closing unofficial mosques, arresting imams and restricting the use of the Uighur language. Freedom of expression and religion was severely restricted in Tibet. Political crackdowns continued on specific groups, including the Falun Gong spiritual movement. Thousands of people were sentenced to death or executed, many after unfair trials.
- Burma: More than 1,300 political prisoners are being held, and arrests and imprisonment for peaceful opposition activities continued. Pro-democracy leader Aung San Suu Kyi remains under house arrest and the Army committed serious rights violations against ethnic minority civilians during counterinsurgency operations in the Mon, Shan and Kayin States.
- Thailand: More than 500 people were killed in the southern provinces where security forces are battling a Muslim insurgency. Attacks against government officials and installations by unidentified groups continued in the south. No one was brought to justice for the deaths of 78 people who suffocated in army trucks after being arrested at a demonstration.
- Singapore: The city-state of 4.2 million people retains the highest per capita execution rate in the world. It also maintains a "broad array" of laws restricting speech and assembly.
- Australia: New counterterrorism laws extended the period of detention without charge and further restricted choice of legal representation. Refugee families were kept separated by the government's mandatory detention policy, and the treatment of indigenous Aborigines remained of concern.
- India: Gujarat state authorities still haven't brought to justice those responsible for violence in 2002 when hundreds of Muslims were killed by Hindu mobs. Security legislation was used to facilitate arbitrary arrests, torture and other grave rights violations, often against political opponents.
- Pakistan: Arbitrary arrests and detentions continued in the context of combating terrorism, and possible extrajudicial executions were reported during security operations in tribal areas. Blasphemy laws were used to prosecute Christians.
- East Timor: In the world's newest country, the rule of law and human rights were undermined by the weakness of key institutions, leading to unlawful arrests, long court delays and impunity for police accused of using excessive force and assaulting suspects. *Reports from AP, Luige A. del Puerto and Dona Pazzibugan*

Samar solon says Palparan 'friendly' but with 'no soul'

From page A1

won't blame anyone else but Maj. Gen. [Jovito] Palparan," said Rep. Reynaldo Uy (1st district, Western Samar). "He looks so friendly but he has no soul. *Santo-santito* (He pretends to be a saint)."

Uy made the comments after the House committee on national defense conducted a hearing on allegations that Palparan, commander of the 8th Infantry Division, was responsible for warrantless arrests and searches as well as the disappearance and killing of a number of activists in Western Samar.

Ominously, Palparan, 54, refused to confirm or deny whether he had special teams of unidentified soldiers conducting night operations against civilians.

The 8th ID is composed of three brigades and nine battalions spread in Samar, Leyte, Masbate and parts of Bohol.

Activists and party-list representatives have accused Palparan of putting Samar under de facto military rule, with Army officers summoning elected civilian officials to military camps and soldiers raiding houses in the dead of night.

Uy said he feared for his life because Palparan had accused him and Rep. Catalino Figueroa (2nd district, Western Samar) of being supporters of the communist New People's Army.

"There are now many disappearances, especially in the second district. In my district, we have two cases of disappearances and there are also strafing [cases]. [Soldiers] go house to house, and when they don't like the answers they hear, the people are kicked and slapped," Uy said, adding:

"When [the soldiers] see tattoos, they iron them. Our fear is the anger of our constituents would worsen and grow deeper, [and] when it explodes, the revolution will start in Samar."

PALPARAN calls Samar lawmakers' accusations as "irresponsible" and "unsubstantiated." JESS YUSON

Palparan was commander of the Army's 204th Infantry Brigade in Oriental Mindoro, where he was also implicated in the murder of civilians and activists. He was named commander of the 8th Infantry Division last February.

Command responsibility

He is awaiting the Commission on Appointments' confirmation of his promotion to the rank of major general.

On Tuesday, Anakpawis Rep. Crispin Beltran assailed President Macapagal-Arroyo for endorsing Palparan's promotion.

He said Palparan "deserves a prison term, not a promotion."

Figueroa, who had delivered the privilege speech that led to the House investigation, said the human rights situation in Samar worsened after Palparan was assigned there.

He said that when he once inquired about a missing resident of Catbalogan, a military officer laughed at him.

Figueroa said that while he and Palparan were fraternity brothers, he objected to soldiers "visiting homes in the middle of the night, people wearing bonnets and short pants, with Armalites."

"[Under] the principle of command responsibility, we're [attributing] responsibility to [Palparan] because he's the commanding general. [Under] previous generals, the atmosphere was not like that. Everything was peaceful. There was no fear among the population," Figueroa added.

But the bespectacled Palparan, wearing his olive green uniform and speaking in an even voice, stood his ground.

When Parañaque Rep. Roilo Golez, the committee chair, asked him if it was true that he had "special teams not properly identified [and] operating" in Samar, he said: "I cannot categorically deny [or] admit that. I don't have [an] official policy on that matter."

He also said he could not answer categorically because evidence that could prove him wrong might show up later.

'Irresponsibility'

Palparan turned on Figueroa, saying the lawmaker had made "irresponsible" and "unsubstantiated" accusations.

"I think it is really wrong for Congressman Figueroa to accuse the military of abuses, atrocities, warrantless arrests, and summary executions," he said.

"These statements, to me, are irresponsible since [they are] coming from a ranking government official who has not presented proof and not allowed enough time for investigation agencies to conduct a thorough [probe]."

Palparan said Figueroa should present witnesses to prove that he had personally ordered the killings and abuses.

He said he was willing to submit himself and soldiers under his command to investigation.

He added that there had been no "specifics" regarding his or his men's personal participation in the cited incidents, "so we are also in a quandary about what to do."

'Violence not new'

Palparan challenged his critics to prove their claims.

"Even from [Figueroa's] own words, he admitted that the insurgency was getting worse," the general said.

He added: "Violence is not new and [has never been] contained. It is wrong for him to say people there lived a life of peace and tranquility. There has never been peace and tranquility in Samar."

Palparan said the NPA was also responsible for killings and abuses.

"The NPA is out to thwart our security operations with ambushes ... [and] liquidation of surrenderers. It is irresponsible, premature and one-sided to accuse the military of atrocities when these atrocities could have also been committed by the insurgents."

Long list

At the Commission on Appointments' deliberations on Tuesday, Palparan was confronted by rights advocates and party-list representatives over his human rights record.

He sat quietly as Beltran, Akbayan Rep. Loretta Rosales and Bayan Muna Rep. Satur Ocampo took turns in reading from a long list of his alleged abuses.

He did not get a chance to speak, with the CA committee on defense suspending the hearing at around 12:30 p.m.

Karapatan secretary general Marie Hilao-Enriquez said Palparan was unfit for promotion because he had been tagged as responsible for the execution, disappearance and abuse of rights advocates both in Mindoro Oriental and Eastern Visayas.

Alex Garcia Lagunzad, secretary general of the human rights group Katungod Sinirangan Bisayas, broke into tears while reading out the general's alleged abuses.

He claimed that since Palparan was reassigned to Eastern Visayas, 199 cases of killing, frustrated killing, disappearance, harassment, torture, physical assault, arbitrary arrest and detention of rights advocates, party-list lawmakers and civilians had been recorded.

Lagunzad demanded that Palparan, whom he described as a "notorious and unrepentant human rights violator," be relieved and made accountable for his "criminal deeds."

"I believe that Congress will become an instrument to condone human rights abuses ... should it confirm [Palparan's] promotion. Let your action in not confirming [his] promotion echo the victims and witnesses' plight and quest for justice and indemnification," Lagunzad said.

Unconstitutional

Ocampo and Beltran assailed Palparan for declaring that he would "end" antigovernment rallies in Eastern Visayas within six months.

"Such a statement violates the constitutional right to free speech and freedom of association, as it expressly curbs the expression of antigovernment sentiments and opinion," they said in an affidavit.

They also said the statement was an ultimatum to the people "to desist from exercising their right to free expression and assembly."

Ocampo and Beltran likewise accused Palparan of "irresponsibly and viciously" branding Bayan Muna and other party-list groups as fronts, recruiters, financiers and supporters of the NPA.

"The confirmation of the promotion of ... Palparan would send the wrong message that military officers facing unresolved charges of grave cases of human rights abuses as well as continuing violations of international humanitarian law are rewarded with promotions instead of making them accountable," they said. *With a report from Delfin T. Mallari Jr., PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

Oil firms lower gas prices

From page A1

Seaoil brought down the prices of gasoline by 55 centavos a liter and of diesel and kerosene by 35 centavos a liter.

Petron Corp. cut prices at 10 a.m. by 50 centavos a liter for gasoline and by 30 centavos a liter for diesel and kerosene.

Caltex Phil. reduced its prices by the same levels at 12 noon, the same time Unioil Petroleum Phil. implemented a rollback of 55 centavos a liter for gasoline and of 35 centavos a liter for diesel and kerosene.

Total (Philippines) Corp. also implemented a price cut of 50 centavos for gasoline and 30 centavos for diesel and kerosene some time yesterday morning.

According to data from the energy department, the benchmark Dubai crude registered a May 2 to 24 average of $45.12 a barrel, almost $5 less than the April average of $47.20 a barrel.

The price of unleaded gasoline based on the Mean of Platts Singapore (MOPS) benchmark for refined petroleum products fell to an average of $54.27 a barrel in the first 24 days of May, from a high $61.50 a barrel registered last month.

MOPS-based diesel also dropped to a May average of $62.45 a barrel from an April average of $68.29 a barrel.

Abaya said that despite the expected increase in demand for unleaded gasoline with the advent of the summer driving season in the United States, prices could remain relatively stable because of the current oversupply situation.

He said even the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries had acknowledged that there was an oversupply of between 1.5 million and 2 million barrels of oil in the market right now.

"We hope this will stifle world price increases and slow down any increase in pump prices," Abaya said.

Despite the positive development in oil prices, however, Energy Secretary Raphael Lotilla warned that it was as important as ever for the Philippines to reduce its dependence on imported fuel as "the era of low prices is already a thing of the past."

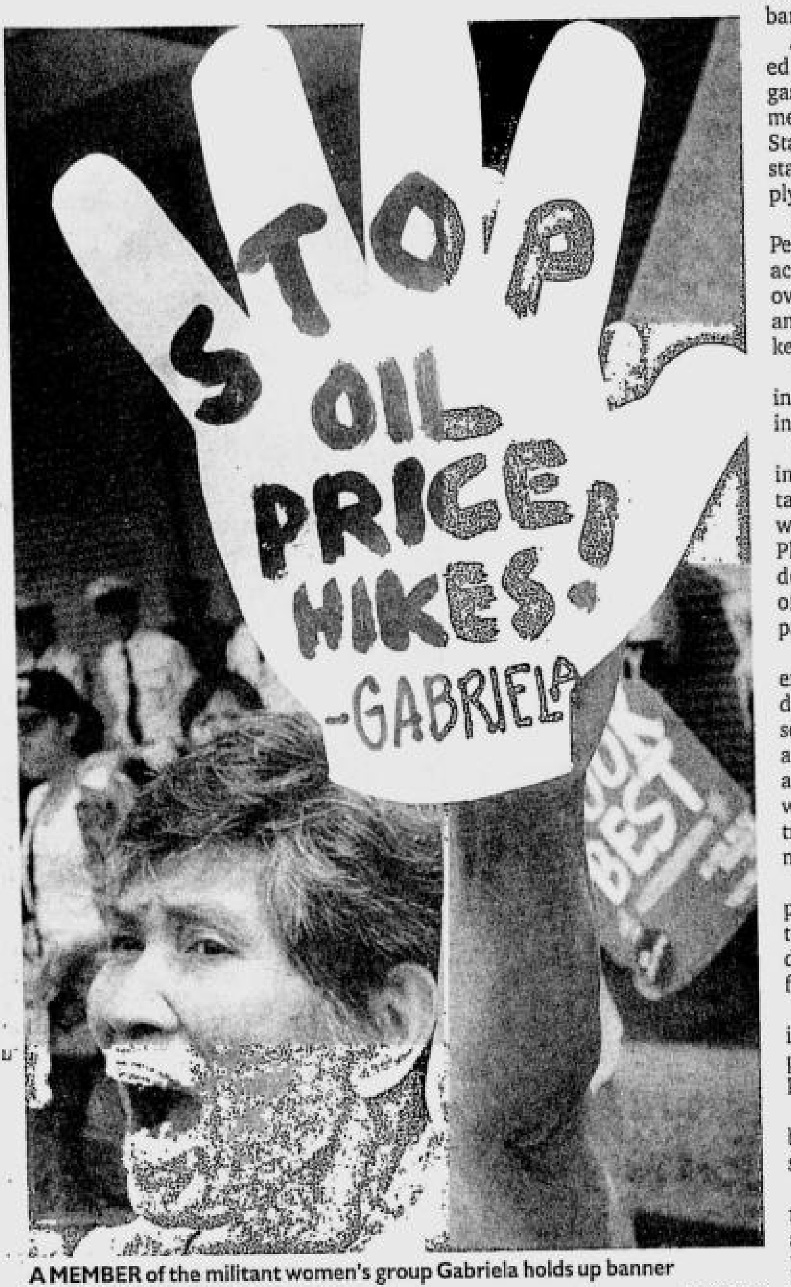
"The (Department of Energy) reiterates its commitment to lessen our dependence on oil as an energy resource by intensifying the exploration and development of our indigenous and renewable energy resources as well as the use of alternative fuels for transportation," he said in a statement.

Since the start of the year, gasoline prices have gone up eight times for a total of P4.35 a liter, while prices of diesel fuel have increased nine times for a total of P4.55 a liter.

The latest price rollback is the third in a month for gasoline products, placing the total price reduction at P2.25 a liter.

But this is the first diesel price rollback after nine successive increases since the start of the year.

Premium unleaded gasoline now retails at between P28.70 and P30.67 a liter, diesel at between P26.15 and P27.50 a liter and kerosene at between P27.70 and P28.50 a liter.



A MEMBER of the militant women's group Gabriela holds up banner protesting high oil prices.

ERIK ARAZAS

Pump Prices: Highs and Lows

	Unleaded Gasoline (pesos per liter)		Diesel (pesos per liter)	
	Low	High	Low	High
1/1/2005	27.20	28.16	22.95	23.80
1/6/2005	26.20	27.16	22.95	23.80
2/7/2005	26.70	27.78	23.35	23.90
3/9/2005	27.80	28.88	24.29	24.90
3/13/2005	28.30	29.38	24.79	25.40
3/18/2005	28.80	29.88	25.29	25.90
3/30/2005	29.30	30.38	25.79	26.40
4/2/2005	29.80	30.88	26.29	26.90
4/17/2005	30.55	31.63	26.50	27.65
5/5/2005	30.60	31.75	26.65	27.65
5/12/2005	29.50	30.63	26.85	28.30
5/18/2005	28.75	29.88	26.90	28.00
5/24/2005	28.25	29.38	26.60	27.70

Holy smoke! Smoking . . .

From page A1

said the bill sponsored by the House committees on justice and foreign affairs sought to penalize acts "threatening or causing serious health dangers to ... the public."

"(When) you light a cigarette, you are causing serious health dangers to the people around you. That's an act of terror (according to the antiterror bill)," he added.

Agabin made the remarks yesterday at a meeting of the Movement of Concerned Citizens for Civil Liberties to highlight the ambiguities of the national security measure and the draconian penalties that accompany its provisions.

The antiterror bill proposes a maximum penalty of death, depending on the severity of the terror act.

Bill ambiguous

"It also penalizes any serious intention to disable an essential service other than as a result of lawful advocacy or stoppage of work. Under this provision, a jeepney strike will be an act of terror when the government says the strike is not lawful," Agabin said.

Other common acts that could be perceived as acts of terror, he said, include possession of a firecracker and even a policeman arresting a suspected criminal.

He said the proposed law would make it a crime to possess "anything lethal" or anyone depriving any person of his liberty.

"Even an arresting officer can already be considered a terrorist," Agabin said.

"It's not only ambiguous. It's not only overboard. It's ridiculous," he said.

Violates due process

Aside from having ambiguous provisions, the law professor said the antiterror bill would violate almost all, if not all, of the provisions enshrined in the Constitution's Bill of Rights.

"It violates the rights to due process, equal protection, against illegal search and seizures, ex-post facto legislation, of speech and of the press, to assemble and to associate.... Even the presumption of innocence," Agabin said, referring to the alleged shortcuts law enforcement agencies are given in pursuing terrorist suspects.

Interior Undersecretary Wencelito Andanar said Agabin was supposed to be at the House of Representatives yesterday as a resource person on the controversial measure still being heard by the committees on justice and on foreign affairs, but "he was conspicuously absent."

Andanar, the legislative liaison officer of the Department of Interior and Local Government, told the INQUIRER that the antiterror bill could be the next measure that the administration would actively push for after revenue-generating proposals.

"It's important. There really is a (security) threat in the region," Andanar said.

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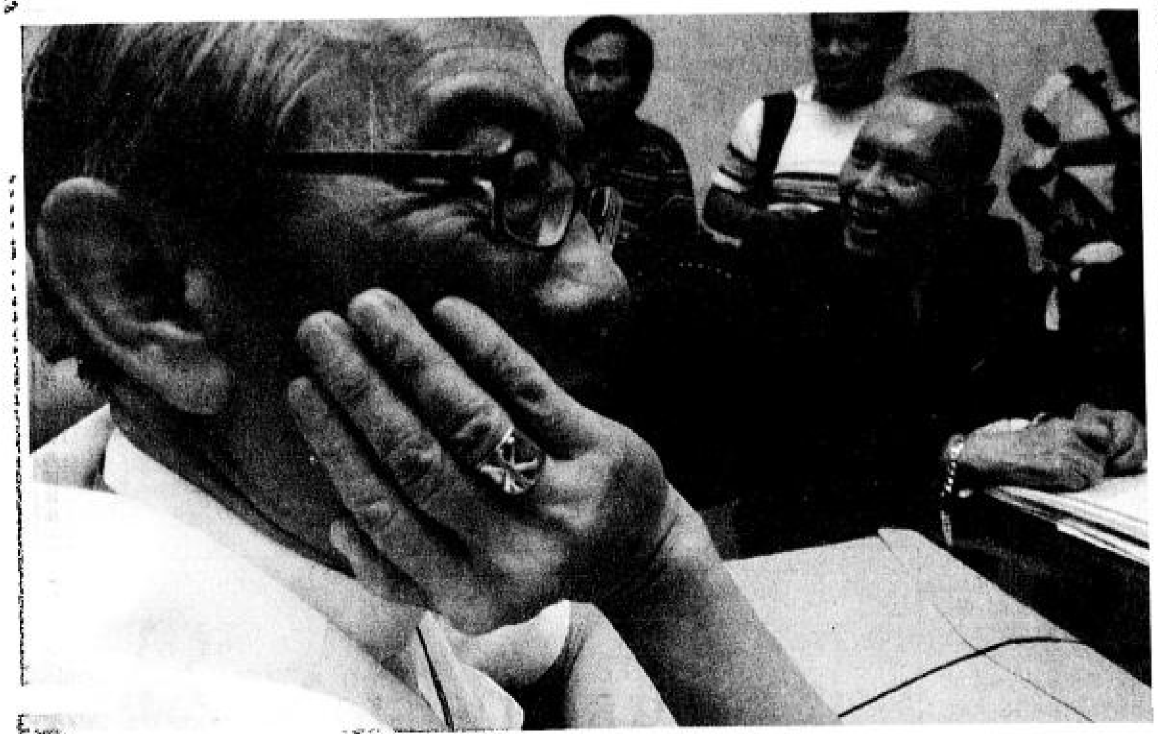


BISHOP Oscar Cruz meets with Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez in Manila on Wednesday. REM ZAMORA

SEN. Joker Arroyo discusses the forthcoming Senate committee hearing on "jueteng" with Senators Manny Villar and Lito Lapid. JESS YUSON

PNP declares Metro, 2 more regions 'jueteng' free

From page A1

Region Police Office also said district commanders had told him that Metro Manila was also now jueteng free. But he quickly added that the reports had yet to be validated.

Lomibao had given field commanders until tomorrow to get a certification—signed by the local police chief, the mayor and the parish priest (or the leader of the dominant church)—that jueteng had been wiped out in their areas, or be sacked.

The Department of Interior and Local Governments is buying the PNP's announcements that it has won the battle against jueteng in at least five regions. But according to Interior Undersecretary Wencelito Andanar, the DILG believes that the war is far from over.

"[We] have no reason to doubt the report made by the PNP. You can say that jueteng has already been crippled in some areas. But the question is, For how long?" Andanar told the INQUIRER.

He admitted that while the PNP appeared to be making headway in its antijueteng campaign, the DILG still had nothing to pin down local government officials tolerating, protecting and even operating the game.

"I've been reading reports of the testimony of the so-called [jueteng] witnesses, and it seems that all they have against local officials is hearsay, if not double hearsay," he said, adding:

"The DILG can start an investigation of these local officials, but unless we have someone who can directly say that he personally delivered money to this local official, nothing will come out of it."

Such acts, Andanar said, would only be good for a "media blitz."

For now

The militant group Kilusang Magbubukid ng Pilipinas confirmed that jueteng operations had been stopped in Regions I, II and III.

"Our chapters say that for now at least, jueteng has stopped in the regions cited by Lomibao," said KMP information officer Carl Ala.

He said jueteng had also been halted in the Cordilleras, "but it is still rampant in Mimaropa, especially in Oriental Mindoro, and in Calabarzon [provinces] Batangas, Quezon, Laguna and Cavite."

Quoting reports from KMP units in Luzon, Ala said it was "obvious that the police knew the jueteng operators and that they advised [the latter] to stop for now."

Ala said jueteng could only be wiped out if the big fish were caught.

"Until that time, the PNP's one-strike policy remains more of a [public relations move]," he said.

Andanar said Interior Secretary Angelo Reyes had given the go-signal for Lomibao to implement the one-strike policy on police chiefs.

He said the DILG expected the drastic measure of removing police chiefs found negligent in implementing the antijueteng campaign to also affect the involvement of local officials in jueteng operations.

"[Corrupt local officials] will no longer have enforcers," Andanar said, referring to the vital role that corrupt police chiefs were playing in protecting jueteng operations and mulcting millions of pesos from operators. "They will be helpless."

No proof against GMA . . .

From page A1

[received jueteng money]. So it's OK. I'll take that as a truth from her. I'll give her credibility for that," he told reporters after emerging from the two-hour meeting with the Department of Justice panel investigating the illegal numbers racket.

Cruz was the first resource person to be invited by the DOJ panel.

Asked whether he found the DOJ investigation credible, Cruz said: "Yes. Otherwise, I will not be here. When we had this meeting, I came to know what this is all about and frankly, I believe that it is worthwhile, that is from the heart, *walang bolahan* (no fooling)."

Asked whether he also believed that like the President, her husband Jose Miguel Arroyo was not involved in jueteng, the archbishop said: "I will give everybody the benefit of the doubt without having the proof necessary for conviction. It cannot be otherwise."

Background checks

Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez directed DILG officials to start background checks on and inquiries into the bank deposits of the 16 supposed jueteng lords, financiers and operators whose names appeared in the list that Lingayen-Dagupan Archbishop Oscar Cruz had submitted to the Department of Justice panel looking into the matter.

Interviewed after the first meeting of the DOJ's Special Committee Against Jueteng and Illegal Numbers Games, Gonzalez also said the supposed cessation of jueteng operations in various regions did not clear all those involved of criminal liabilities.

Gonzalez said the DOJ panel would summon the 16 gambling lords said to be operating in 24 provinces nationwide.

He said among those in the list were Batangas Gov. Armando Sanchez, Rodolfo "Bong" Pineda, and Rosario "Charing" Magbuhos. He said the other names had already appeared in the INQUIRER.

Gonzalez said that with the "leads" provided by Cruz, he had asked the representative of Interior Secretary Reyes to "trace these people, get statements from them, make background investigation."

Reyes could not be present at the meeting because he was attending a hearing at the Commission on Appointments.

Gonzalez said Cruz had promised to bring the witnesses before the DOJ panel, including a jueteng lord from Central Luzon.

Money laundering

He quoted Cruz as confirming police reports that jueteng operations had ceased in some parts of Luzon, but he pointed out that the gambling lords were nevertheless "still liable" for illegal gambling.

Gonzalez said the reason the DOJ panel invited Vicente Aquino, executive director of the Anti-Money Laundering Council (Amlac), to the meeting was to secure the help of Amlac in going over the huge deposits of jueteng lords and financiers.

He said the panel had provided Aquino the names of the top jueteng personalities. "It is not easy to just trace back records. You have to go through deposits. But they are helping us," he said of Amlac.

The P10-million check given to Cruz, for example, was signed by Rodolfo Hizon III, Gonzalez said, adding:

"We have asked Amlac to check on it."

Interviewed by reporters, Aquino said that as a "financial intelligence unit," Amlac could not divulge its moves. But he said it started its own investigations after learning that jueteng operators were supposedly using overseas Filipino workers to launder money.

"Jueteng is an unlawful activity or predicate offense under the AML law. The job of the Amlac is to investigate the money-laundering aspect of this unlawful activity. And that is what we are doing now ... All I can say is that Amlac is taking action on the matter," he said.

3 modes

Aquino said there were three modes of money-laundering offenses under the Anti-Money Laundering Law.

"No. 1 is transacting or attempting to transact dirty funds or dirty properties, and that includes jueteng money. Second, facilitating money laundering. And third, knowingly failing to file a covered or suspicious transaction report with (Amlac)," he said.

Hard evidence

The PNP spokesperson, Senior Supt. Leopoldo Bataoil, admitted to reporters in Malacañang that it was difficult to go after jueteng financiers.

Bataoil said Lomibao's order to stop jueteng operations nationwide covered the arrest of collectors, bettors, operators and financiers.

"But the problem we are seeing in our operations is coming up with hard evidence against suspected financiers," he said.

Asked how the PNP planned to maintain the jueteng-free areas, Bataoil said it would be through police vigilance and the help of the community.

He said Lomibao's order was for a "sustained effort" not only by the PNP but also by local officials.

Bataoil gave reporters the PNP accomplishment report on the campaign against illegal gambling from 1998 to the first four months of this year.

The report showed that for that period, police arrested 141,629 people, of whom financiers numbered 1,040.

From these apprehensions, the PNP filed cases against 71,388 persons and seized P107.2 million from the gambling operations.

The biggest apprehensions—36,753—were made in 2000. *With a report from Christine Avendaño*

Señeres finally calls it quits, slams GMA

From page A1

new one that will break the chains of our hardship and suffering, " said Señeres, reading from a 10-page statement that was attached to his resignation letter.

Señeres dramatically signed the resignation letter onstage at a gathering that included, besides family, friends and NLRC employees, former Defense Secretary Fortunato Abat.

He then ordered a messenger on the spot to take his letter of resignation to Malacañang.

The NLRC gathering also marked Señeres' joining forces with Abat's Coalition for National Salvation. Abat, a retired general, formally welcomed Señeres to the alliance he launched on the eve of Labor Day during which he called for the ouster of Ms Arroyo through a "people power" uprising and the takeover by a revolutionary council.

Earlier this month, Señeres confirmed that Ms Arroyo had confronted him in early April about reports that he had been allegedly involved in efforts to undermine her administration during meetings with a military official and foreign diplomats, including former US Ambassador Francis Ricciardone.

Señeres, who was appointed NLRC chair by deposed President Joseph Estrada, denied the allegations. He said the accusations against him were being orchestrated by people interested in his post.

He also questioned Ms Arroyo's May 1 order transferring the NLRC's administrative powers to the labor secretary and declared that as a career officer, he would serve as NLRC chair until he retired or was removed for just cause.

On Monday, however, Señeres announced that he was quitting.

"I'm happy serving as head of the NLRC but I'm not happy with the leadership of this government. I'm not quitting on serving the country, I'm merely breaking free from the government that I no longer believe in," Señeres said at yesterday's press conference during which he recited a litany of reasons for turning against the government.

Ermita reaction

Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita yesterday described the move of Señeres to join forces with Abat as a case of "the enemy of my enemy is my friend."

"He thought he could find common cause with (Abat)," said Ermita, adding that it was best that Señeres had resigned as he himself had said that he was not happy and "the feeling was mutual."

The Palace has yet to receive Señeres' resignation letter, he said.

Ermita said there was as yet no replacement for Señeres.

"I think he did a better thing and now he can do what he wishes to do short of violating our laws. This is a free country," Ermita said.

But the executive secretary refused to say if Señeres' joining with Abat confirmed Ms Arroyo's allegations against him.

He said that what the Palace knew was that Señeres had spoken to US Embassy officials and that he did not say good things about the government.

"And since he was with government, we thought it was not proper for him to have done that. It came out in media, he was confronted with that," Ermita said.

He stressed that it was important for people in government to work as part of a team.

"He himself said that [the government] did not want him and he did not want to be in government either, so it is best that he be a man and get out," Ermita said in Filipino.

Asked how Malacañang would deal with the growing impression that it was losing supposedly "good people" like Señeres, Ermita indicated that good men and women were not hard to find.

"There are plenty to choose from. What is important is that those on our team are trustworthy, whom we know to be sympathetic to our way of governance. It is difficult to have someone who may be independent-minded but instead of being one with government would become the source of its destruction," Ermita said in Filipino.

Señeres' resignation followed those of Presidential Commission on Good Government Chair Haydee Yorac, antilogging czar Victor Corpus, Commission on Higher Education Chair Rolando dela Rosa and Health Secretary Manuel Dayrit in the past two months.

Right to rise

In his lengthy statement studded with quotations from a slew of US and British statesmen justifying the citizens' right to rise against an oppressive and corrupt government, Señeres urged Filipinos to be aware and to act.

He said the Armed Forces and the Philippine National Police should not hesitate in exercising their constitutional duty to protect and secure the people and the state against the "clear and presently oppressive and enormously evil situation that our society and people are now in."

He claimed that his analysis was shared by many in legal circles and the diplomatic community.

Señeres, who served as Philippine ambassador to the United Arab Emirates from 1986 to 1988, said he could not stomach any longer what he saw in the government he described as "diabolical."

He faulted the government for failing to stop violence and criminality, hunger and poverty, joblessness and underemployment, the loss of skilled workers to emigration, smuggling, environmental degradation, illegal gambling, fraudulent elections and the unhampered operation of drug syndicates.

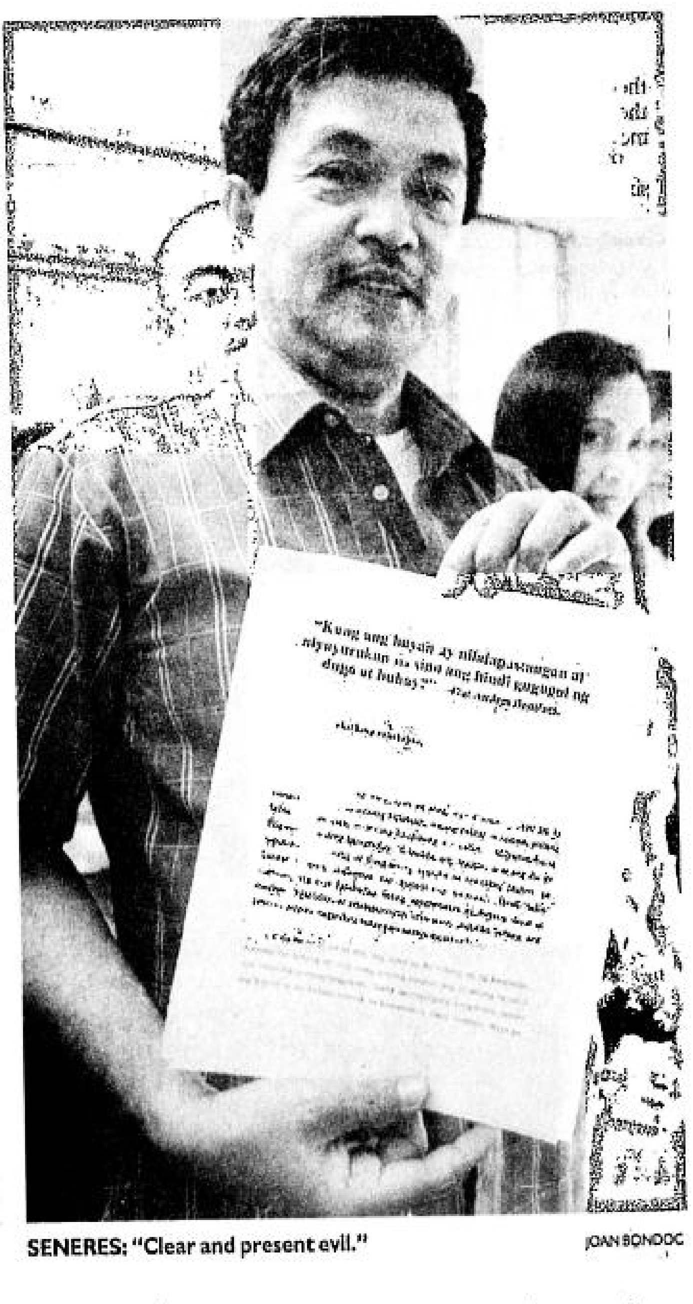
He said the government's response for appeals for just rule was to heighten and expand corruption.

Señeres said his resignation would take effect on June 30, in accordance with administrative rules. He also sought to avail of benefits under the optional early retirement program.

A career government executive, Señeres would have been entitled to serve until he reached the retirement age of 65. He is now 57.

He was appointed to the NLRC in 2000 and was one of the few Estrada appointees to have remained in office after Ms Arroyo took over.

Among those in the audience were representatives of workers' organizations as well as known pro-Estrada groups from the Union of the Masses for Democracy and Justice.



SENERES: "Clear and present evil." JOAN BONDOC

Sto. Tomas to press reforms, vows to ease NLRC backlog

By Jerome Aning

THE REFORMS to remove the backlog of cases and speed up the disposition of disputes at the National Labor Relations Commission will continue even with the resignation of NLRC chair Roy Señeres, according to Labor Secretary Patricia Sto. Tomas.

Sto. Tomas said NLRC commissioners, division chiefs and arbiters would be subjected to performance audits and accountability checks to stamp out red tape as well as corruption in the agency.

She made it clear, however, that the Dole would not be taking over the NLRC, but only assuming "administrative supervision" as provided by Executive Order No. 204 issued by President Macapagal-Arroyo.

"I do not want to be chair of the NLRC. I do not want to control it," Sto. Tomas said in an interview with reporters.

Señeres, meanwhile, said he would be devoting his time on the OFW Family Club, the non-government organization that he founded to help distressed overseas Filipino workers and their families.

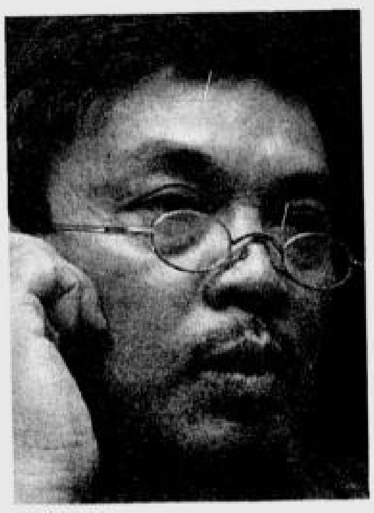
He said he had declined invitations to join anti-administration groups.

"I will never be a part of the political opposition because if you look at it over the years, political parties never did anything good for the country," Señeres said.

He said EO 204, placing the NLRC under Dole supervision, was illegal because under a provision in the Labor Code, the Dole's role at the NLRC would be in program and policy coordination only.

He threatened to take the issue to court.

Sto. Tomas explained that her authority at the NLRC would not be absolute as it was only delegated by the President.


SEÑERES

STO. TOMAS

She said that she would not be signing checks or vouchers and that her powers to discipline those who fail to perform or are found to have erred would be recommendatory. It would still be the President who would deal with such issues, she said.

The labor secretary, who expressed surprise at Señeres' decision to quit, said she thought the two of them would be implementing the NLRC reforms that she had recommended.

She said the agency's 15 commissioners and some Dole undersecretaries were possible candidates for the post vacated by Señeres.

Sto. Tomas reiterated that the problems at the NLRC would be solved by internal reform and not by additional funds or personnel, as Señeres contended.

She said a committee of Dole officials would be helping her coordinate the changes at the NLRC.

Some of the suggestions include the simplification of the proceedings of labor cases and the requirement that disputes first undergo conciliation, mediation or voluntary arbitration before being brought before the NLRC.

The Alliance of Progressive Labor welcomed Señeres' resignation and urged the 14 other NLRC commissioners to follow suit, to pave the way for the abolition of the NLRC and the reform of the entire system of labor dispute settlement.

"The labor dispute settlement system is too legalistic, making the delivery of resolutions to labor cases harder and longer, further opening the floodgates for collusion and corruption," said APL chair Daniel Edralin.

Workers want a single entry point for all labor cases instead of the current practice where they can sometimes lose cases because of "forum shopping," he said.

"We want our labor dispute settlement system to have mediation as the backbone, to employ professional and highly trained and competent arbiters and to eliminate expensive layers of appeals and provide a direct recourse to the Supreme Court instead," Edralin said.

APL supports a congressional bill by Akbayan party list Rep. Del de Guzman proposing to create the National Mediation and Arbitration Board.

Duque says GMA groomed him to be health secretary

By Christian V. Esguerra

IN AN apparent attempt to squelch rumors that he got the position as a reward for his role in President Macapagal-Arroyo's 2004 election campaign, incoming Health Secretary Francisco Duque III yesterday said the President had been grooming him for the post as early as 1999.

Duque, the president of the Philippine Health Insurance Corp., the state-run health insurance scheme, was instrumental in the distribution of the free Philhealth cards bearing Ms Arroyo's photos to four million poor Filipinos during the campaign.

It is thought that the congressional Commission on Appointments could give Duque a tough time for his role in that campaign gimmick.

"I consider this job as something that the President had prepared me for," Duque told reporters in a Quezon City media forum.

He said the then Vice President Arroyo had a hand in making him a permanent member of Philhealth's board of directors in 1999.

"In 2001, she wanted me to assume the presidency [of Philhealth] already but because there was a problem with the term of office of the current president then, she decided to put me at the DOH as an undersecretary," he said.

He soon got the top Philhealth post but his six-year term was cut short by two years after the President announced his appointment as health secretary early this month.

"She thinks I might be able to do the job even more and perform better as DOH secretary," he said.

As far as the Philhealth cards issue was concerned, Duque pointed out that even key opposition figures had their photos similarly placed in the cards as a gimmick.

Among them were losing vice presidential candidate Loren Legarda, Representatives Imee Marcos of Ilocos Norte and Gilbert Remulla of Cavite, and Mayors Jejomar Binay of Makati and Jose Victor Ejercito of San Juan.

Marcos, a member of the CA, earlier warned Duque that he was in for a tough time at his confirmation hearing.

Duque said the President's photo was inserted in the Philhealth cards as a gesture of gratitude for program's being given a budget by the executive department.

Legarda and the other politicians got theirs because they all put in contributions that allowed the enrollment of many indigent Filipinos in the health insurance program.

He noted that politicians like them wanted a "political value added" for the contributions that they made.

"If you want to infuse funds, there's no problem, I would put even the picture of your pet dog as long as we'll be able to enroll more poor people to Philhealth," he said.

He said there were even Philhealth cards showing Ms Arroyo's picture at the front and Legarda's at the back.

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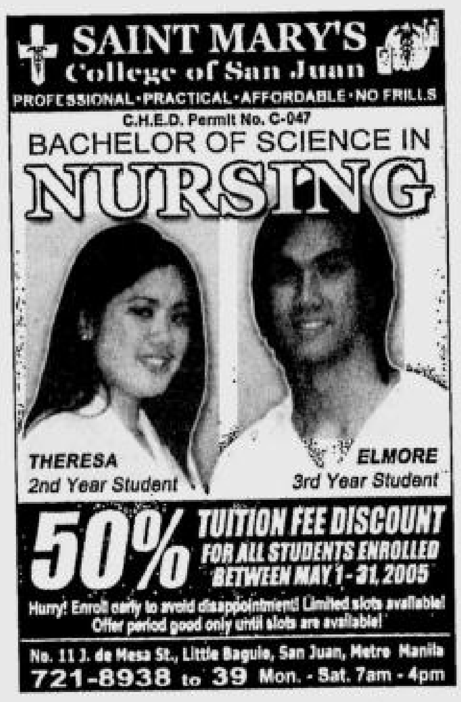
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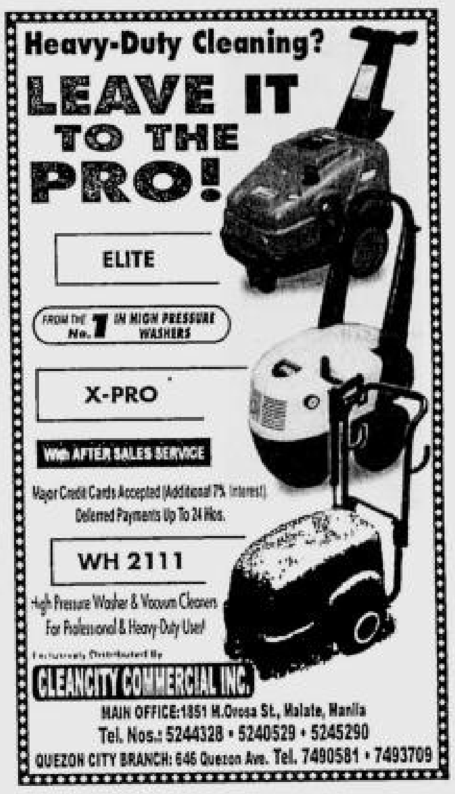
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The WORLD

Editor **Luverne B. Gueco**

Iraq's most wanted wounded, says website

BAGHDAD—Iraq's most wanted man Abu Musab al-Zarqawi has been wounded, according to the website of his al-Qaida front group, as insurgent attacks left eight US soldiers and dozens of Iraqis dead over a 48-hour period.

And a massive joint sweep by US and Iraqi troops through Baghdad's western suburbs since Sunday has seen the capture of more than 400 suspected insurgents, commanders said late Tuesday.

The website of Zarqawi, who has a $25-million US bounty on his head and is reputed to be behind some of the deadliest insurgent attacks in Iraq and the grisly execution of hostages, indicated life-threatening wounds to the Jordanian-born militant.

"Islamic nation, brothers in unity, we pray God that our sheikh, Abu Musab al-Zarqawi, recovers from the wounds he has sustained," said a statement issued in the name of his militant organization on the Internet Tuesday.

"The injuries of our leader are an honor for us and a motivation to tighten the net on the enemies of God and to step up attacks," said the al-Qaida organization in the Land of Two Rivers in a statement whose authenticity could not be verified.

US officials reacted cautiously to the claim and said they could not immediately verify the authenticity of a statement posted on a militant website.

In Jordan, a sister of Zarqawi said: "I haven't heard anything. I know nothing."

His relatives who live in Zarqa, north of Amman, have repeatedly said they have no contacts with him.

An Iraqi general whose brigade does house-to-house searches and identity checks in Abu Ghraib—a suburb infamous for its US-run prison—said a total of 437 people had been arrested since Sunday in a massive sweep that involved US as well as Iraqi troops.

ZARQAWI

"Abu Ghraib is the main point of entry for car bombs going to Baghdad," said Iraqi Gen. Aziz Swady. "It's necessary to recapture this town to ensure safety in the capital."

Two suspected insurgents were killed and two wounded during the sweep, while one Iraqi soldier was also hurt, US officers said.

Leaflets were distributed at the start calling on residents to stay in their homes and Iraqi police and soldiers repeated the instructions over loudspeakers as troops began searching the area.

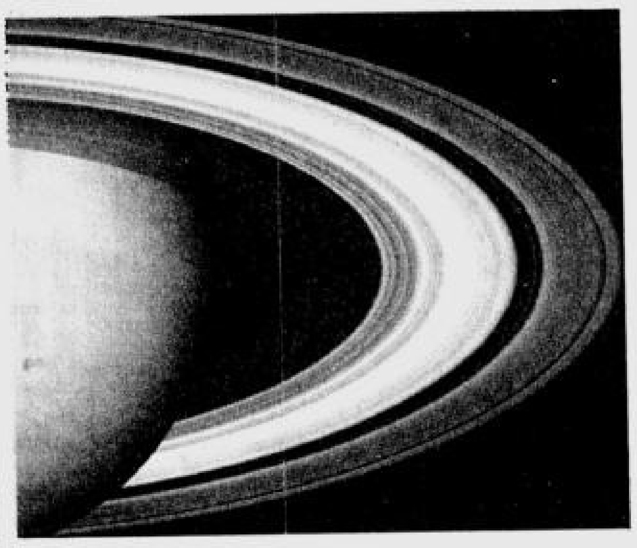
Dozens of car bombs have exploded in the Iraqi capital over the past four weeks, destroying any honeymoon for the new Shiite-led government of Prime Minister Ibrahim Jaafari.

In the first 18 days of May alone, there were more than 21 car bombings in the capital, most of them suicide attacks, compared to 25 for the whole of 2004, a US commander said.

The total death toll is unclear but the Iraqi authorities put it at more than 600 already this month.

Meanwhile, relatives of a Turkish businessman said he was kidnapped by insurgents demanding his transportation company stop working with US forces.

In Baghdad, four US soldiers died Tuesday in two separate attacks, the US military said. *AFP*



SATURN UP CLOSE

The most detailed look ever at Saturn's rings, obtained by the Cassini spacecraft, is shown in this image released by Nasa May 24. Color is used to represent information about ring particle sizes measured by radio signals. REUTERS

Israel to free 400 Palestinian prisoners

WASHINGTON—Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon pledged Tuesday to release 400 Palestinian prisoners to "help" Palestinian President Mahmud Abbas who will hold talks at the White House on Thursday.

Sharon took a more conciliatory line with his Palestinian counterpart in a speech in Washington, and again committed himself to the withdrawal of Israeli settlers from the Gaza Strip, but he insisted Israeli security must not be compromised.

Sharon said the Palestinian prisoners would be released on his return to Israel from a private visit to the United States.

His comments came two days ahead of a White House meeting between Bush and Abbas. But the Palestinian leadership called Sharon's gesture "propaganda."

Israel has pledged to free 900 Palestinians but only 500 have been released so far.

"When I return to Israel we will release 400 more prisoners," Sharon told an audience of 5,000 people at the annual meeting of the influential American Israeli public affairs committee.

"I do not intend to lose the opportunity" to talk with the new Palestinian leadership, Sharon said.

Israel would try "to help Chairman Abbas as much as we can as long as we do not risk our own security," added Sharon. "That is the red line."

Sharon's speech to the meeting was in stark contrast to comments reportedly made to a closed meeting of a pro-Israeli lobby group in New York on Monday. "Without offending the Arab world, it must be said that their agreements, declarations and speeches are not worth the paper they're written on," Sharon was quoted as saying by the Israeli daily Yediot Aharonot.

SHARON

And the Palestinian leadership was dismissive of the promise to release 400 prisoners.

"This comment is pure propaganda because he is in the United States," Palestinian Planning Minister Ghassan Khatib said in Ramalah.

"Sharon was supposed to release 400 prisoners under the Sharm el-Sheikh agreements but he didn't. We don't believe what Sharon says, it is what he does on the ground that counts."

Israel was to release the prisoners as part of a confidence-building package agreed by Sharon and Abbas at a summit in the Egyptian resort town of Sharm el-Sheikh on Feb. 8, at which the two leaders announced an end to hostilities.

After freeing 500, Sharon announced in early May that further releases were on ice.

"Since Sharm el-Sheikh, Israel has arrested more than 400 Palestinians," Khatib charged. "Sharon just wants to show the United States he is ready to implement what they want, but he just talks without anything happening." *AFP*

Saddam probably lied on WMD, says inspector

UNITED NATIONS—Saddam Hussein probably lied about his weapons of mass destruction because of pride and to protect himself from perceived Iranian attacks, a former US and UN weapons inspector said on Tuesday.

Charles Duelfer, head of the CIA's Iraq survey group that hunted weapons after the 2003 Gulf War, said the threat from Iran was very real to Saddam, who wanted to create an impression he had more armaments than he really had.

"There was a greater concern than we could appreciate sitting here in Washington of the threat posed by Iran," Duelfer told the Council on Foreign Relations.

"Our gut feeling was not the same as the gut feeling one would have sitting in Baghdad."

Iraq and Iran fought a bloody war from 1980 to 1988 and kept up a low-level conflict after that. Suspicions were rife that Iran was developing weapons of mass destruction.

"Saddam was certainly aware of the WMD assessments of Iran and he created a certain ambiguity about what his capabilities were," Duelfer said.

Duelfer reported last October that Saddam did not have weapons of mass destruction for more than a decade before the 2003 US-led invasion of Iraq. But he said Saddam hoped in the future to reconstitute his unconventional arms programs and refused to let skilled scientists leave the country.

In a rare on-the-record talk, Duelfer said narcissism and pride played a large role in Saddam's obfuscation of his weapons, since he wanted to be a leader in science and technology, which meant nuclear capabilities.

Duelfer was the deputy executive chair of UNSCOM, the UN special commission, which fielded inspectors in Iraq from 1991 to 1998. Iraq denied any unconventional weapons programs but shown proof to the contrary, Saddam's government allowed many to be destroyed but refused to account in detail what happened to all the armaments.

While President George W. Bush used Iraq's alleged weapons to justify the 2003 invasion, Duelfer said Saddam had a "key intelligence failure" by not understanding that the United States would follow through on its threats after the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks on New York and Washington.

Saddam in 1991 established as a priority to get UN sanctions lifted, imposed after the 1990 Gulf War when his troops invaded Kuwait.

He tried to hide his arms programs, particularly biological and chemical weapons materials that are easier to conceal than nuclear facilities or missiles. Duelfer said Iraq resented inspectors prowling around, actions that created mistrust between Iraqis and the UN teams.

But in 1998, Iraq decided that "no matter what they did the United States in particular as not going to climb off on resolving the sanctions issue" and so Baghdad cut off cooperation with inspectors, Duelfer recalled. Saddam then tried to erode the sanctions by exploiting splits among the major powers and bribing politicians around the world. *Reuters*

NEANDERTHAL WOMAN

This photo taken at the "paleosite" in the village of Saint-Cesaire, 140 km north of Bordeaux, France, shows a reconstitution of the face of a young Neanderthal woman, nicknamed "Pierrette," who lived some 35,000 years ago. AFP

Michael Jackson won't take stand; Leno does

SANTA MARIA, Calif.—Michael Jackson's lawyers called their final witnesses on Tuesday in his child molestation trial—including wise-cracking talk show host Jay Leno—and will rest their case without having the pop star testify in his own defense.

Lead Jackson attorney Tom Mesereau told the court that comedian Chris Tucker, who starred alongside Jackie Chan in the "Rush Hour" comedies, would be the last of 50 defense witnesses, clearing the way for closing arguments in the sensational trial next week.

Mesereau hinted during his opening remarks that Jackson could testify, which would have subjected the 46-year-old entertainer to cross-examination by prosecutors who say he has a history of targeting adolescent boys for sexual abuse.

JACKSON

Leno, the comedian who hosts the top-rated late night "Tonight Show" program, was summoned by defense lawyers to testify about a call he received from Jackson's young accuser in 2000.

Mesereau told jurors that during the call Leno heard the boy's mother whispering in the background and was so suspicious that he called police to report a shakedown attempt.

But the comic, who came to court dressed in a dark suit and wearing an American flag lapel pin, said that while he recalled voice mail messages from the boy, his memory of their one live phone call was fuzzy and it was the police who contacted him—not the other way around.

"The voicemails were, 'Oh, I'm a big fan, you're the greatest.' They were overly effusive for a 12-year-old," Leno told the jury. "It seemed a little bit unusual. I'm a comedian in my mid-50s. I'm not Batman."

Defense lawyers have sought to portray the mother of Jackson's accuser as a grifter who tried to wheedle money from celebrities and coached her son to lie about the molestation charges against Jackson.

But Leno said that he did not know if it was the boy's mother or a nurse who was in the background during the call and was emphatic that the family never asked him for money or anything else. *Reuters*

Math prize winner justifies use of A-bomb in WWII

OSLO—The winner of the world's biggest mathematics prize, who did pioneering work developing nuclear weapons, said on Tuesday that the dropping of atomic bombs on Japan 60 years ago prevented further World War Two bloodshed.

Peter Lax, in Oslo to receive the $980,000 Abel Prize for mathematics, said that working as a 19-year-old student on the US Manhattan Project at Los Alamos, New Mexico, in 1945 among top scientists felt like living in a science fiction plot.

"The original use of the bomb on Japan I think was justified," the Hungarian-American mathematician said, stepping into the controversy which has raged over the dropping of the bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki in August 1945.

The alternative of a US invasion of Japan would have been "far bloodier" than allied landings in Normandy, France, in 1944 that paved the way to the defeat of Hitler, he said. "It was all ended (in Japan) by dropping the bomb," he said.

"And there's another aspect that occurred to me much later... the horror that humanity has of nuclear weapons comes partly because we have seen what it can do," he said. "It was a kind of inoculation of humanity against using nuclear weapons," he said.

The bombs killed about 140,000 people in Hiroshima and 70,000 in Nagasaki by the end of 1945 and thousands of others died later from illness and injuries. Many other experts argue that the bombs were among the great evils of the 20th century.

US President Harry Truman saw the atom bomb as a way of reducing casualties in the war after fierce battles in the Japanese islands of Iwo Jima and Okinawa.

As a promising student, Lax was drafted in 1945 to the Manhattan Project in New Mexico. He returned to Los Alamos in 1950 for a year for work linked to the hydrogen bomb and worked there each summer for a decade after the war.

He said he had no idea where he was going when drafted.

Lax, now 79 and of the Courant Institute of Mathematical Sciences at New York University, won fame for work on equations that have had applications ranging from how to pump more oil from underground reservoirs to improved aerodynamics for planes.

The Abel Prize was named after 19th-century Norwegian mathematician Niels Henrik Abel and set up in 2003 to promote maths, reward excellence, and fill a gap left by the Nobel Prizes for science that are awarded in Stockholm.

Lax won the prize "for his groundbreaking contributions to the theory and application of partial differential equations and to the computation of their solutions," the prize citation said. *Reuters*

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(PDI–May 20 & 26, 2005)

Sino-Japan diplomatic row resumes

BEIJING/TOKYO — China dismissed Japan's apologies for its wartime past on Wednesday but Tokyo sought to cool tempers and analysts said the two would not allow a snub to Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi deteriorate into a major row.

Still, one Foreign Ministry official in Tokyo said the government would demand an explanation for China's Vice Premier Wu Yi canceling a meeting with Koizumi on Monday and returning home early.

Japanese stocks fell for the second straight day on Wednesday amid concerns that the snub and the resumption of a war of words between Asia's two most economically powerful nations could affect bilateral trade worth about $170 billion in 2004.

"The thorny issue between China and Japan has come up again. We know it's a diplomatic issue, but it's not good (for the Japanese economy)," said Hiroaki Kuramochi, managing director at Bear Stearns in Tokyo, after the benchmark Nikkei index closed about 1.1 percent down.

On Tuesday, the Nikkei fell 0.22 percent.

China originally said that Wu had cut short the trip because of pressing domestic business, but Chinese officials later made it clear it was a reaction to Koizumi's refusal to give up visits to the Yasukuni war shrine, which Beijing sees as a symbol of Tokyo's past militarism.

"Such annual calls at Yasukuni have put mutual visits of top government leaders between China and Japan on hold," the state-run China Daily newspaper said in an editorial.

"Japanese leaders are fully aware of the nature of the thorn in the side of China-Japan relations. An empty apology cannot blow away the clouds that are hanging over bilateral relations," the editorial said.

Japan has apologized for wartime atrocities during its 1931-45 occupation of parts of China. Koizumi himself made a public apology in April in a speech to an Asia-Africa summit in Indonesia.

But Koizumi makes a point of visiting Yasukuni, where convicted war criminals are honored alongside Japan's 2.5 million war dead.

Last week, while Wu was in the country, he said he would make an "appropriate decision" on when to go again. He also defended his visits to the shrine.

Last month, ties sank to the lowest point in decades as thousands of Chinese protested against Japan's wartime aggression, its bid for a permanent seat on the UN Security Council and the revision of a school history book which they said whitewashed its military past.

Despite the latest downturn, analysts said the two countries would not allow relations to spiral down to a state where they put economic ties at risk.

Japanese officials were clearly angered by Wu's sudden departure, but Japan's top government spokesperson sought to cool tempers on Wednesday, saying he would no longer publicly comment on the incident.

"Commenting further would not be constructive for Japan-China relations, so I will not comment," Chief Cabinet Secretary Hiroyuki Hosoda told a news conference.

"It is our objective to remove the various problems that lie between Japan and China and to develop our relations," he said. "I think the same goes for China."

The two sides are also set to hold talks at the end of this month on a disputed gas field in the East China Sea.

However, Japan has asked China for an explanation for Wu's cancelation of her meeting with Koizumi, a foreign ministry official said. The official did not elaborate.

Analysts said that despite the missed chance to repair ties during Wu's visit, the economic interdependence between China and Japan could become a driver of improved relations.

"Trade between them has become one of the biggest in the world. Their economies would not operate without the other," said Zhu Jianrong, a Chinese-born political science professor at Toyo Gakuen University. "They have become inseparable."

Some analysts say that, despite China's insistence that Japan own up to its past, the real issue is over which of the Asian powers will triumph in their contest for influence in the region. *Reuters*

Congress approves stem-cell research

WASHINGTON — The US House of Representatives voted Tuesday to approve federal funding for embryonic stem-cell research despite President George W. Bush saying he will veto such a bill.

The measure passed the Republican-dominated House by a 238-194 vote, paving the way for a confrontation between Bush and lawmakers in his own party over the controversial measure which divides many Americans.

The measure still requires a Senate vote, before heading to Bush's desk.

Lawmakers passed the measure, hoping it could allow researchers to develop new treatments for incurable diseases, hours after Bush voiced new opposition to federal funding of embryonic stem-cell research.

"We should not use public money to support the further destruction of human life," Bush said in a speech at the White House. *AFP*

Brunei reshuffles Cabinet

BANDAR SERI BEGAWAN—The sultan of Brunei has removed four ministers, including the conservative Islamist education minister, and created a new energy ministry in a Cabinet reshuffle.

The changes, announced by Sultan Hassanal Bolkiah late Tuesday in a television address, are the most sweeping since the country's independence from Britain in 1984.

The reshuffle, which brings corporate figures and civil servants into the government, indicates an attempt to project oil-rich Brunei as a moderate Islamic country, much like its neighbor, Malaysia, and to better harness its petroleum resources, which account for about 90 percent of its gross domestic product.

Still, the sultan retains supreme power in the country on Borneo Island, which it shares with Malaysia and Indonesia. The sultan is prime minister, defense minister, finance minister and chief of the armed forces. He appointed his son, Crown Prince Al-Muhtadee Billah, senior minister in the Prime Minister's Office. *AP*

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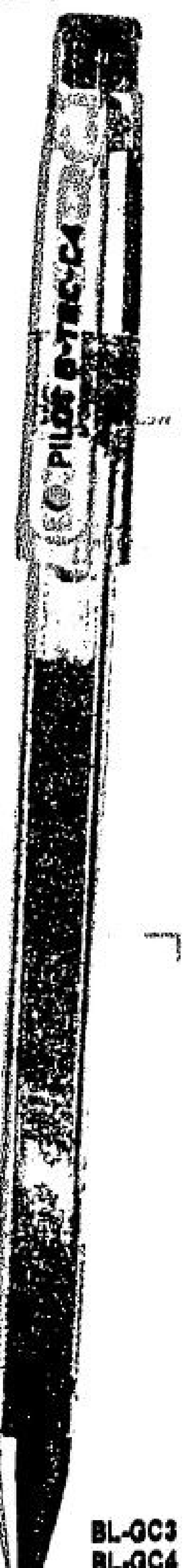

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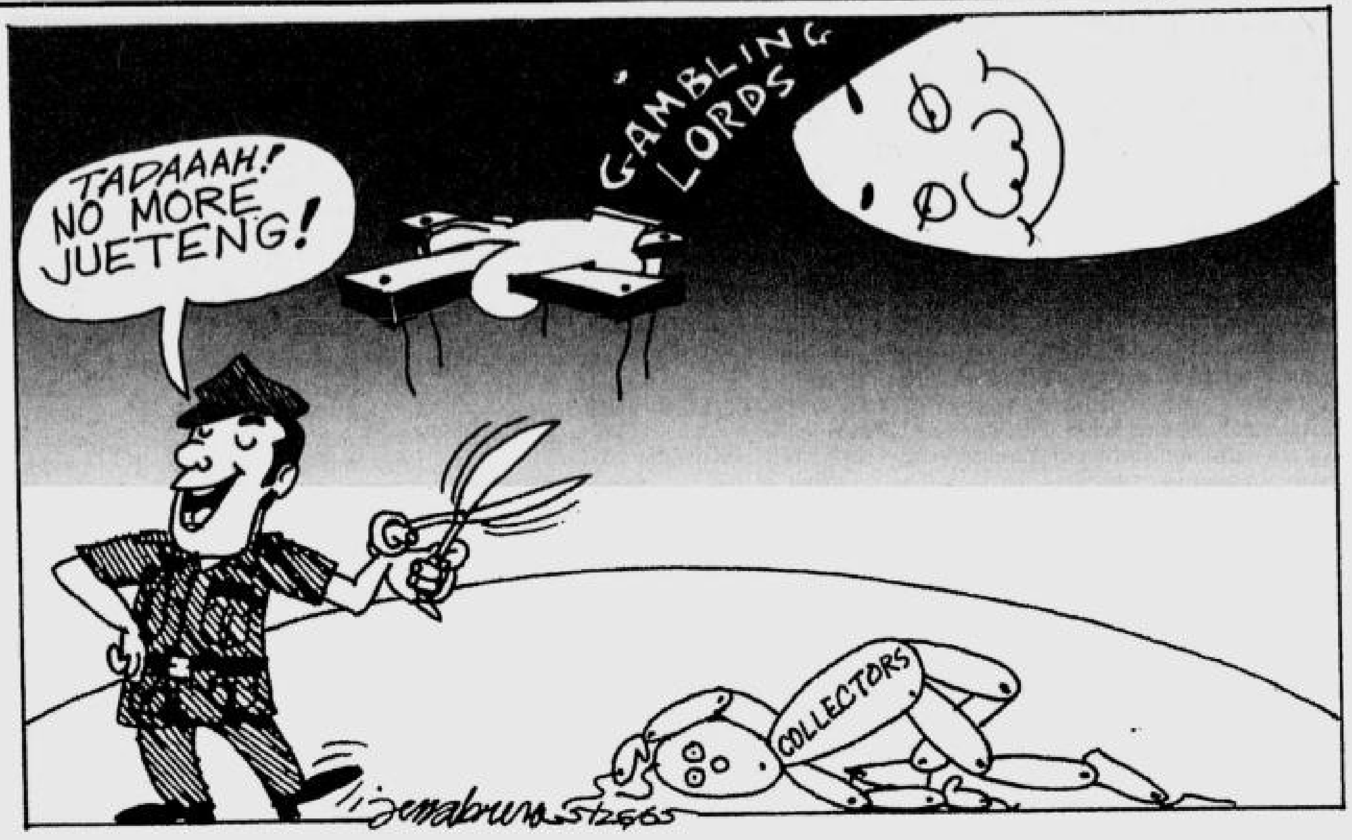

Wrong enforcers

EDITORIAL

IT took her some time, but at last President Macapagal-Arroyo has begun to address the twin issues now rocking her administration: the continued killings of journalists and the unchecked operation of jueteng and other forms of illegal gambling across the nation.

Over the weekend, Ms Arroyo noted that the incidence of violence against journalists had reached "frightening" proportions and said the killings should be stopped. She condemned the attacks against journalists as "acts of violence on the nation itself" and said her administration "won't rest until the perpetrators of these vicious crimes have been brought to justice and punished."

One day later, perhaps hurt by allegations made by Sen. Aquilino Pimentel Jr. that she had benefited from jueteng, Ms Arroyo declared all-out war on the numbers game and other forms of illegal gambling. She said the law should be strictly enforced not only against the operators but also their protectors. "I strongly urge the filing of charges against anyone involved in payola," she said.

To anyone who cared to listen, the President's orders sounded strong and clear: She wants to put an end to the killings of journalists and illegal gambling operations stopped. And she wants everyone involved to be prosecuted and imprisoned.

But apparently the very officials who are supposed to carry out those orders didn't hear her well or didn't know what she was talking about. Interior Secretary Angelo Reyes, for one, earlier wondered aloud why people were making a fuss over the spate of murders of journalists, when nobody mourned the deaths of soldiers except for him and the chief of staff of the Armed Forces. Besides, he said, some of the murdered radio commentators and newspapermen were killed not because of their journalistic work but for other reasons, thereby seemingly implying that they deserved to die.

Given this mind-set of the Cabinet member whose office oversees the operations of the entire police force, is it any wonder that dozens of journalists' murders remain unsolved and that the killings go on? Considering his kind of thinking that the murder of journalists is no different from the death of soldiers in combat, how can Reyes be expected to make a serious effort to identify and arrest the killers of journalists?

Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez is hardly any better. By his own account, Gonzalez sought the President's permission to go after all those involved in the killing of Marlene Esperat, a crusading journalist who had filed 15 cases against some Cabinet members, two congressmen and several lower-ranking officials of the Department of Agriculture in Region 12. He said he was convinced responsibility for the crime did not stop at the level of the regional officials.

In the war against illegal gambling, Gonzalez has likewise indicated that he would seek guidance from Malacañang. After the President declared that "no one will be spared" in the renewed antigambling drive, Gonzalez announced that he was prepared "to go as deep as I will be allowed."

All this raises serious questions about Gonzalez's competence in running the government's prosecution service. For one thing, it should be asked how much work he can get done if he thinks he has to take his cue from Malacañang all the time. An already very slow-moving justice system can hardly be expected to move faster when the chief government prosecutor has to consult constantly with the President about his next move.

But justice delayed is not even half of the problem, given Gonzalez's idea of how he is supposed to go about his job. The bigger problem has to do with justice being denied. In the Esperat murder, for example, did he really have to get the green light from the President to proceed against top officials if they are involved? What if the President said no, would Gonzalez have called off the search for the mastermind? And how can he get to the bottom of the jueteng scandal, if he is willing to go only as far as the President allows him?

The last question is not merely rhetorical. The names of the President's husband and one of her sons have been coming up in reports about jueteng payoffs. Is Gonzalez saying that if the President were to tell him to lay off the members of her family, he would have to obey even if there is strong evidence against them?

Surely that axiom about serving at the pleasure of the President isn't meant to be seen this way. Unless, of course, Gonzalez wishes to emulate John Mitchell of Watergate notoriety.

Gun barrels and human hopes

VIEWPOINT

Juan L. Mercado

"DEMOCRACY grows out the barrel of a gun." That's how today's coup plotters retailored Mao Zedong's 1938 axiom.

"Four groups within the military" are mulling another coup, we're told. Asean's weakest armed forces could clamp on a civilian-military junta, they feel.

Isn't that what the Togolese military peddled recently? Troops hustled the 69-year-old dictator Gnassinngbe Eyadema's son into the late president's seat, even before his doctors could say heart attack.

"What's happening must be called by name," the African Union protested. "This is a coup d'état."

But Gringo Honasan and buddies resist having the tag of coup-plotters pinned on them. He publicly had his tattoo of the failed Magdalo mutiny blotted out. Is that abandoning those he egged on?

"Are coups for rent the country's newest business?" a Sun Star editorial asked. If so, the track record is poor. All coups that Honasan and group initiated since 1986 collapsed. "This is a world record of sorts," notes the Yale University study, "Closer Than Brothers."

"Age is fatal to revolutionists," the French rebel Camille Desmoullins once said. Honasan and those of "God Save The Queen" plots, like Juan Ponce Enrile, are like the rest of us, made of common clay. They've aged. Their geriatric generation blew their chance for greatness.

But some younger officers' constitutional reflexes may have similarly atrophied. Don't they pose a threat?

Numbers involved in the Magdalo mutiny were small, journalist Marites Vitug said in a Christian Science Monitor interview. But their legitimate grievances were shared by many.

"The military's continued vision of itself as a fiefdom outside normal national law fosters corruption," she said. Lack of accountability resulted and "enabled some of the country's long-running conflicts to fester… (and) fed the terrorism problem."

The United Nations, meanwhile, shed diplomatic tip-toeing when Salil Sherry noted that Southeast Asian countries are well on the way to meeting the Millennium Development Goals, but the Philippines trails.

Millennium Development what? One buck gets you 10 that officials like Jinggoy Estrada or Lito Lapid can tell you, off the bat, what makes *jueteng* tick. But MDGs?

In September 2000, the Philippines joined 188 other countries in signing the MDG Declaration. That set eight major goals and 15 specific time-bound targets: from halving extreme poverty, reducing by two-thirds the under-five mortality rate to enrolling all kids in primary school by 2015.

"Poor people care about what happens to their income levels … whether they have access to clean water and sanitation or their children get to school," then UNDP administrator Mark Malloch Brown wrote in Human Development Report.

"The Goals can be met … and provide a new framework that demands results and increases accountability," he added. "But they require strengthening governance."

But now, "government admits, in its initial assessment report, that it might meet only five of the eight major goals," the INQUIRER reports.

Beyond those macro-statistics, like shrinking of poverty incidence from 27.1 percent in 2001 to 24.7 percent today, is the reality of unmet needs.

"There are at least 20 million people here who live in poverty," Sherry noted. "Unless citizens actually push their governments and leaders to focus on poverty, things are not going to change."

People power? That remains a democracy's weapon of last resort. What erupted in Edsa in 1986 continues to reverberate worldwide. Lebanon's "Cedar Revolution" ousted Syrian occupiers peacefully this month. It follows the latest non-violent uprisings: Georgia's "Rose Revolution" and the Ukraine's "Orange Revolution."

But judging from the latest surveys, Filipinos are reluctant, for now, to take to the barricades. Joseph Estrada's repeated urging for people power to spring him from the clink were a dud. The junta trial balloons have been punctured the same way.

Yet, jostling by citizens is urgent because in many countries, government is hijacked by elites, argues former Indian Central Bank Governor Bimal Jalan.

For the poor, the political system "does not have much to offer—except the periodic satisfaction of casting their votes," he writes in the 2005 World Bank publication, "Measuring Empowerment."

In fact, between the 1980s and 1990s, no less than 81 countries, the Philippines included, toppled dictatorships propped up by military arms. And at century's turn, nearly 200 countries saw citizens freely casting their votes.

Since then, there has been a curdling of human hopes. Inept governance and massive poverty spawned disillusionment.

"Several countries have returned to more authoritarian rule," notes the UN study, "Deepening A Fragmented Democracy." "Others have become failed states, breeding grounds for extremism and violent conflict. Others are in transition to nowhere." Like the Philippines?

"For all the trappings of a national government, we are not far from the era of the barangay," the historian Horacio de la Costa, SJ, once noted. "The congressman who moves around with his bodyguards is not much different from the datu surrounded by his retainers… We conduct our affairs pretty much in the manner of Lapu-Lapu and Humabon."

How to recapture government from the hijackers, while staving off the gun barrels of caudillos and commissars is the job for us all.

Culture of violence

THERE'S THE RUB

Conrado de Quiros

THERE was an interesting item that appeared on our inside pages last week, and that was PNP Deputy Director-General Ricardo de Leon proposing that media help in lessening the culture of violence in this country. "There is an alternative to the culture of violence," he said, "and that is the culture of peace. The TV and film industry can do their part by not glorifying violence." Specifically, he said, they can do with not extolling criminals by turning their lives into exciting stories that the youth want to emulate.

I will assume good faith and not lump his proposal in the category of recommendations, which government officials have been making of late, for the media to become more responsible so that their members would not be murdered. Which is a thoroughly idiotic idea. I will assume that De Leon made this proposal in all sincerity, in the hope it will truly lessen violence in our midst.

I must say then that I am glad Nandy Pacheco has found a fellow critic of violence in the media from an unexpected source. I do not know that De Leon favors a "Gunless Society" as well, as Nandy advocates, but I am not one to sneer at small blessings. Nandy, of course, has been saying the same thing for some time now: "We have to change our macho culture and movies have to stop glorifying the use of guns. Why do all conflicts have to be resolved by guns anyway?"

But having said this, I must say as well that De Leon doesn't hit the target at all. Not by a mile.

To begin with, he wants to blame someone for the proliferation of the culture of violence in this country, he shouldn't turn his sights on the media, he should turn his sights on his commander in chief. I did warn repeatedly over the years the horrendous impact our blind adoption of George W. Bush's so-called "war against terror" would have on our way of life, or death. The "war against terror," as unleashed specifically shortly after 9/11, didn't just bring in its train paranoia and bigotry, it brought with it a culture that extolled arms and violence.

You saw that in the sudden rash of movies and TV programs praising soldiers and war, backed up by jingoistic rabble-rousing, wrapped up in the robes of love of country. Truly, patriotism is the last refuge of scoundrels, as Samuel Johnson said. Indeed, it went with attempts to revise history, turning the Vietnam War into a noble enterprise, something America should have won. An entire TV show dedicated itself to the proposition that the CIA, the agency that engineered the murder of Salvador Allende and many other independent-minded Third World leaders, was a much maligned organization, composed of idealistic patriots.

I warned then that the "war against terror" would not only thrust us back to martial-law times, when national security took precedence over human rights, which boded ill for the Bill of Rights, particularly freedom of expression, it would also demolish whatever barriers we had built up after Edsa against a return to a martial culture. Which was essentially a culture of murder and mayhem. My disaffection with GMA became complete at that point. She it was who, having become President through people power, an act expressly dedicated to democracy and peaceful ways of resolving conflict, made war and tyranny the order of the day.

The extent to which she raised an altar to Ares, the god of war, you saw in the generals jumping up and down and drooling like horny creatures over the weapons donated by the US military to aid us in slaughtering ourselves. They were beside themselves admiring the make of the heavier weapons, calculating in glowing tones their lethal effectiveness. No movie or TV program can come close to that in encouraging a culture of violence. We continue to embrace the "war against terror," amid mounting proof, particularly from Iraq, who the true source of terror is, no amount of regulating the media to lessen its violent fare will make things better.

De Leon misses yet another important point in his suggestion, one I've harped on for almost as long as I've written a column, which is that there is something in this country that encourages mayhem far more than the movies, and that is life. Forget that the movies extol violence, mind only that real life does. If you are a parent, why should you worry that TV and the movies will teach your kids to use force and deceit to get what they want when all around them they find object lessons in it?

Not the least in the utter monstrosity that has been happening lately, which is the wholesale murder of journalists. That, not quite incidentally, is now knocking on the doors of Metro Manila. The last victim, though he survived his attack, was Pablo Hernandez, who writes for Bulgar. It's more than a culture of violence, as Reporters Without Borders has pointed out, it's a culture of impunity, the murders being authored by the authorities themselves. Why worry about movies encouraging the youth in particular to take to a life of crime by extolling the lives of criminals when you have reality itself where this country's role models succeed in life by taking to a life of crime?

As Michael Moore showed in "Bowling for Columbine," Canada too has violent movies and violent games, yet does not have violent crimes happening routinely on its streets. Certainly, Canada does not have journalists being routinely gunned down by thugs and public officials they have pissed off. What Canada does have is a law enforcement that routinely ferrets out criminals and brings them to the dock. What it does have is a leader who does not routinely do violence to truth, honor and justice.

Forget the movies, mind only real life. In this country, that is where the real inducement to violence comes from.

Apartheid's ill effects hound South Africa

POLITICAL TIDBITS

Belinda Olivares-Cunanan

BEFORE CLOSING my notebook on South Africa, there's an issue I have to tackle: the effects of the apartheid policy that dates back to the early 20th century. Time, in its April 25, 2005 cover story on South Africa, discussed the effects of the lifting of apartheid in the last 10 years. The magazine sought to put its problems in the context of the fact that while white South Africans make up only 10 percent of the population, they and the foreign investors control more than 90 percent of the listed corporations that own the country's total wealth. The remaining 10 percent is distributed among various ethnic groups, mainly the huge black majority and the so-called "colored" people. This equation should be borne in mind to understand the current situation. As I studied the problem, I was reminded in some ways of the situation in our country, especially with regard to the Muslim population in the south.

* * *

The term "whites" refers to the descendants of Europeans who developed South Africa over the past 300 years. These were mainly Dutch settlers who began coming as early as 1682 to set up a source of supplies for ships of the Dutch East India Co. as they journey from Europe to Asia via the Cape of Good Hope. These Dutch descendants have come to be known as "Afrikaners" and they speak a sort of pidgin Dutch called "Afrikaans." There are also the descendants of the British who colonized South Africa in two waves in the 18th and 19th centuries and the descendants of the French Huguenots who sought to escape religious and political persecution in Europe in the late 17th century and settled in the Cape Peninsula.

The term "colored" refers to the offspring of inter-marriages between blacks and Asians from the old Batavia and Java in what was later to become Indonesia, as well as Filipino fishermen and political exiles in the 19th century. There are also the descendants of workers from India who were recruited to work in the huge sugar plantations in the Eastern Cape, notably the port city of Durban. This area has the biggest Indian population outside of India. (Mahatma Ghandi worked there for about 10 years as a lawyer to get better treatment for his compatriots.)

The mixture of races has earned South Africa the nickname of "Rainbow Nation," but in reality, at this point, this only applies to the color of the skin. The problem is how to break down centuries-old barriers of distrust and alienation, and encourage more interaction and integration between the whites and the black majority. If the country succeeds in this experiment, it could become the model for all the countries in Africa, some of which are in deep trouble owing to their total rejection of their colonial past. South Africa's failure would not only stunt nation-building but could also jeopardize the most prosperous economy in Africa and its political stability.

* * *

Over the past 300 years, South Africa was built up into the most modern and developed African nation through the vision and capital of the whites. They built the great agricultural plantations (sugar, banana and other fruit enterprises) and industrial enterprises and corporations with their capital and technical know-how up to First-World standards. In addition, the whites who had ruled South Africa laid out First-World infrastructures that become immediately evident to a newly-arrived foreigner. The infrastructures include the excellent road network all over the country, an educational system for the whites comparable to that in the mother countries and beautiful white communities that seem plucked straight from the Old World. The massive reforestation programs are also very impressive, as is Kruger National Park, a huge government-run game reserve envisioned by Paul Kruger, an Afrikaner who was president of the northern republic before the union was formed.

Many whites, blonde and blue-eyed, indicating unadulterated European lineage, have established their roots there for at least two centuries and consider themselves nothing but South Africans.

* * *

It cannot be denied that without the vision, capital and efforts of the whites, South Africa would be like many other African countries, still very much Fifth World. But it cannot also be denied that all these great white enterprises were built on the labor of the blacks and migrants from other African countries in the past three centuries. History books assert that to preserve these sources of labor, the Afrikaner rulers sought to keep the blacks in a state of ignorance and illiteracy and poor living conditions and paid them very low wages. Moreover, as early as the first decades of the 20th century, legislation put in place the disastrous apartheid policy of segregation of the races, whose ill effects are felt in many aspects of life. One was the Native Land Law of 1913, which restricted the blacks to only 7.5 percent of the land (later increased to 13 percent). No white person was allowed to buy land in those areas, but no black was also allowed to buy in the 87 percent reserved exclusively for the whites. These black settlement areas were declared autonomous home lands, and it was only after 1994, when Nelson Mandela was elected president, that the "Homeland Policy" was abolished, and the black areas were integrated into new provinces.

* * *

But as one history book noted, there was separation of the races not only in the economic sector. The private domain of non-whites was also increasingly regulated and controlled. Marriage or any love relationship between different racial groups was forbidden, and in all public areas segregation was enforced, with separate entrances even in post offices. But the most detrimental, because of its long-term effects, was the very low-standard of education given to black children. It's said that subjects in black schools included washing dishes and weeding of flower beds. *(Next: present-day realities)*

The desecration story

HUMAN FACE

Ma. Ceres P. Doyo

IF I learned about something really grave and shocking, would I write about it in order to call attention so that people could do something to prevent it or address it? Would I write about it even if I thought it might cause a violent conflagration or a bloody confrontation between parties concerned? Or should I sacrifice revealing the unpleasant truth that I know in order to prevent the worst that could happen?

These were some of the thoughts that raced through my mind after a May 9 Newsweek story gave rise to violent protests in many places around the world. Emotions ran high. At least 15 lives have been lost and dozens have been injured. The smoke has not yet cleared completely.

Newsweek has since retracted that explosive detail in the story reported by Michael Isikoff with John Barry. In the May 23 issue, Newsweek editor Mark Whitaker said: "We regret that we got any part of our story wrong, and extend our sympathies to victims of the violence and the US soldiers caught in its midst."

Newsweek came out with a story that mentioned that US personnel who interrogated Afghan inmates in Guantanamo Bay defiled the holy Koran. The story said that the interrogators "had placed Qur'ans on toilets, and in at least one case flushed a holy book down the toilet."

The problem with the detail on the desecration (the Newsweek story was not wholly about this one grave act) was that the reporter did not see this being done with his own two eyes. He was quoting someone who was not named.

When things got out of hand, the source backed off. Well, partially, at least. The reporter and Newsweek were left holding the bag, so to speak.

Isikoff, who was interested in happenings inside Guantanamo prison in Cuba where the Afghans have been detained for the past couple of years, was digging for more.

Newsweek narrated how it started: "Isikoff knew that military investigators at Southern Command (in Guantanamo) were looking into the allegations. So he called a longtime reliable source, a senior US government official who was knowledgeable about the matter. The source told Isikoff that the (investigators') report would include new details…including mention of flushing the Qur'an down a toilet."

Newsweek had approached two officials for comment but one declined and the other had a different view of the report. So far, there has been no confirmation of a "toilet incident, except for one case, a log entry, which they still have to confirm, where a detainee was reported by a guard to be ripping pages out of a Qur'an and putting (them) in the toilet to stop it up as a protest. But not where the US did it."

In Afghanistan and Pakistan, desecrating the Koran is punishable by death. The Koran is so sacred for the Muslims that camp commanders in Guantanamo have put in place strict procedures in searching. Only Muslim troops, interrogators or chaplains may handle a copy.

I can understand the sacredness of the Koran to the Muslims and the anger that results from its desecration, but I find it hard to understand the violence and bloodshed that must ensue. I am not belittling the sacredness of the Koran, I am just stunned and appalled by the intensity of the rage.

Granted that the desecration happened, must a wrong be corrected by another wrong (violence and bloodshed)? Must the consequence of the transgression be worse than the transgression itself? I believe something more complex was at work there.

The pent-up rage (justifiable to a certain extent) was already there before the desecration item came out. Newsweek just stoked the fire of anti-US hatred in Muslim areas.

So much bloodshed for something that didn't happen? How now to justify the bloodshed? Now, Newsweek can take all the blame? That Newsweek erred in its judgment is another matter.

And the source? Pentagon spokesman Danny DiRita told Newsweek and confirmed saying this to CNN: "People are dead because of this son of a bitch. How could he be credible now?"

After the death of Pope John Paul II, there was a news item that said someone was claiming that he had in his possession a sacred Host consecrated by the late Pope. It was supposedly being auctioned off at e-Bay. If you are a Catholic (and Christian, of course) you'd be shocked and angry. Catholic or not, lying or not, should this supposed Host auctioneer be lynched to death?

Now, what about my problem in the first paragraph? (I am not factoring in here the risk to the life and limb of the reporter.)

If something was only told orally to me, then I need one or two more to confirm, if possible, especially if the information is damaging. The INQUIRER editorial yesterday was quite clear about this. Of course, nothing beats an official document.

Supposing the reliability of the sources is A-OK, or, better still, I was an eyewitness myself and I have photographs to show, would I tell? Yes I will. The victims, if they survive, will tell the world about it anyway sooner or later.

But if the transgressors were just cracking demeaning jokes (say, about putting pork in the food of Muslim inmates) but not within hearing distance of the inmates concerned, would I write about my observations?

It depends. Sure, I'd like to expose meanness, but if I were **absolutely** certain that writing about the verbal slurs (uttered among, say, prison guards) would lead to the burning of a whole village, maybe I'd rather first tell their superiors about it. Or maybe I'd suggest in the article that something about them is so wicked.

If I were absolutely certain this person planted a bomb in a stadium with thousands of young people, and in fact, admits setting it to explode in five minutes, would I torture him to make him say where the bomb is?

(Send comments to cerespd@info.com.ph)

Unity gone by

THE LONG VIEW

Manuel L. Quezon III

COLUMBUS, Ohio—Smiling, happy people are what I saw, at a benefit dinner for a children's foundation. The star attraction was a group brought in all the way from Los Angeles. Known as "Fab Four," they're known as a "tribute" band. They copy the Beatles.

But they're something of celebrities in their own right. As the Los Angeles Times' Geoff Boucher put it in 2001: "The members, all Southern Californians, met at Beatles fan conventions and on the tribute band circuit. Their impersonation (they don't use taped music to buttress their sound as many tribute acts do) is so polished it has taken them to gigs in Brazil, Japan, Argentina and beyond. They performed close to 200 shows last year and, at major bookings, can make a few thousand dollars each."

Let me tell you they're good. Very, very, good. From the costumes, to the fake accents, to the bass player learning to play left-handed just like Paul McCartney, the Fab Four have the original four of the Beatles down pat. Close your eyes, and you'd swear you're listening to the real thing. Their self-advertised "note-perfect renditions," and undeniable stage presence, don't go as far as elaborate disguises or even plastic surgery to make them look identical to the Beatles—which, considering their generally Chicano looks, made me keep imagining they'd burst out in mariachi music in between sets.

Tribute groups like the Fab Four are the closest anyone will ever get to a live performance by the Beatles, considering that only Paul McCartney and Ringo Starr are still alive. A couple of generations have grown up knowing the Beatles only as landmarks in music history and not as a dynamic, cutting-edge group. I myself only knew the Beatles from being made to sing "We all live in a yellow submarine" in kindergarten, or "Yesterday" embalmed in Easy Listening arrangements, or, from "Twist and Shout" being popularized by the 1980s film "Ferris Beuller's Day Off."

Those at the charity event I attended, on the other hand, associated the Beatles with their youth. Watching the Fab Four was, for them, a journey back to the days of their youth. Their journey through adolescence was accompanied by the transformation of the Beatles from British Invasion Pop to the Sgt. Pepper's counterculture years. They are old enough to remember when the Beatles appeared on the "Ed Sullivan Show" in 1964. Today these Beatles fans have children who are the same age as they were when they first heard the Beatles.

I like many of the songs of the Beatles, but I must confess there's a certain, frankly amazing, quality to theirs songs when heard performed live. A sense of how fresh, even revolutionary, certainly youthful and not yet tragically bound up with nostalgia, the songs and songwriters are. And even, when you think of what was going on then, how subversive the lyrics could be and still are: *You tell me it's the institution,/ Well, you know/ You better free your mind instead./ But if you go carrying pictures of Chairman Mao,/ You ain't gonna make it with anyone anyhow./ Don't you know it's going to be alright,/ Alright, alright…*

No wonder you never hear of their singing the Beatles during Filipino exile's karaoke night in Utrecht, the Netherlands.

One thing struck me most while watching the fifty- and sixty-somethings gyrating to Beatlemania redux: it was how the music of one group could be, for them, the defining music of their generation. This goes far beyond the successful middle-aged professionals I saw dancing here; it applies, I think, for mostly everybody of that age range.

There were giants of music, and those giants strode the earth from pole to pole; all corners of the world contain a generation that continues to find identity and derive significant memories from music genuinely popular. For my generation, raised in the 1970s, it's different, as it is for most people, I'd think, raised since. For us, it is the music that sets us apart from others that defines us, not the music that we have in common with all too few.

But in the end, there was a particular poignancy, watching these people for whom the Beatles meant so much, and for whom the 40th anniversary of the beginning of the Beatles phenomenon is living, real, memory. How long the road has been, since they first sang what (then) must have been such improbably futuristic words: *"Will you still need me, will you still feed me/ When I'm sixty-four…*

It is the music that sets us apart from others that defines us, not the music that we have in common with all too few

Headless chickens

(This letter is for a friend who moved to the United Kingdom to do her masteral studies at the London Business School. The addressee, whom I will call Christianne, has been experiencing doubts about her decision and episodes of depression arising from existential questioning of what she really wants, the same question haunting most twenty-somethings today.)

YOUNG BLOOD

Jason Reyes

We want to know what the young are thinking about. What are their thoughts on current issues? We welcome contributions from the twentysomething and below.—Ed.

HELLO Christianne,

How are you? You've been in my mind for the past weeks—week nights mostly. I apologize for not being able to play the role of a good and timely confidant as far as international text messaging is concerned. More importantly, I apologize for not being ready with the right words during those moments that would even have the faintest possibility of helping ease your depression.

I considered my own depression stages, but I was afraid that that would make us like drinking buddies. I was asking myself whether it was more apt to share with you my own personal experiences or just focus on the bright light at the end of the tunnel. When it comes to comforting troubled friends, I have come to think that it always helps to tell them that I am in a more pathetic situation than they are, and so they should cheer up. But in the end, I chose to look into a mishmash of both and reflect on the varied and usually polarized opinions of peers, friends and family. I am hoping that with this "mathematical equation," I will be able to pin down the non-negotiables, further fortify our person and from there, cruise into a spontaneous personal development voyage.

First off, I salute you. I salute us. *Ang galing nga natin, eh.* We're able to do what we want to do or those that at least we **think** we want to do. It is always a notable achievement when one is able to make things happen for him or herself. That in itself is a meaningful cause for celebration and thanksgiving.

But there is one downside to it that I have discovered. I have realized that because we have actual experience in achieving what we want, we think we can **do** anything, **be** anything, and **get** anything. That illusion spawns emotional mayhem, for the whole world now looks to us like a grand smorgasbord of opportunities—of options.

A friend once reminded me to shape up and bear in mind the fable of two cats and a dog. Cat A and B were comparing notes on their plans in case an angry dog came along. Cat A had **one** strategy carefully thought out, while Cat B boasted of **several** options, all of them equally feasible. When the monster dog finally came, Cat A naturally employed his sole plan and successfully escapes from the raging dog. Cat B, on the other hand, took some time pondering which option to take and died.

I do not agree with the analogy if you would ask me. What makes it different from our situation is the element of urgency. I do not believe we are at a critical crossroads demanding our instant response. Cat B, was facing a life-and-death situation and needed to employ an effective plan. His multitude of options proved to be more of a liability than an asset.

What I am trying to say is, we still are not in that stage where we must decide and decide correctly here and now or suffer. I would like to think we are in the self-determination and self-reinforcement stage where our diverse experiences will be an asset later on.

By exposing oneself to a range of experiences, a diversity of cultures and ideas and a variety of business, academic and political structures, one involuntarily promotes deeper understanding, tolerance, reasoning and deeper thinking. I suspect these would even give us a competitive advantage later on in life.

I look at it this way: We have at least 35 to 45 years to go. As of now, we have spent just about four years in the "outside world." This makes up roughly 10 percent of our productive life. My thesis is that we are in that timely and proper phase where we can invest in our personal composition. That does not mean we should only engage in activities we are "sure" about or work in the arenas we are comfortable in, it likewise includes making unusual decisions and going through experiences that might be contrary to what we want in life: our so-called "non-negotiables." Truth to say, exposing ourselves to the possible "blacks" in life helps fortify the boundaries of our "whites."

Once these boundaries are defined, then we have our "playground." This represents the level of confidence and credibility we have built for ourselves. We know by heart the insides of this "playground" and have developed the necessary senses to detect opportunities or threats coming from the outside.

We should bear in mind that success can be defined as society's positive reaction to us and to our actions. Success is usually measured by the value society places on such things and the compensation it gives. Given this, it is a good strategy, I think, to carefully understand how the collective whole moves, thinks, reacts and defines value.

This is getting to be a long letter. To sum it all up, I would just like to say: Hold on. Savor that experience and squeeze as much as you can from it. Get every penny's worth of education you can from the classroom and outside of it. This, like you said, might turn out to be something you didn't want after all, but the discovery of that fact is already worth your money at the very least. On top of that, you are getting a bonus in the form of a world-class education. What more can you ask?

Fortify your character and try to derive as many qualities, characteristics and frames of thought as you deem useful for you now and in the future. These will later on become the seeds of your fortune. Then you will feel fulfilled because at this early stage of your life, you were able to focus on what you want and at the same time cast away the things you don't want.

We're on the right track. You're on the right track. And we will continue to be proud of you.

The universe is always on track and I believe we are where God wants us to be. After all, who are we to have the sole power over our lives?

If there is one thing I have learned from my travels and deduced from my personal travails, it is how utterly useless it is to be chasing after something that goes a hell lot faster than we do. Our recourse is to enjoy the thrill of the chase.

Hang in there, Christianne! I will be coming to surprise you one of these days.

Jason Reyes, 26, is doing his post-graduate studies at De La Salle Professional Schools-MBA.

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Also blame greedy schools

WHILE I agree with Conrado de Quiros' position regarding the liability of Pacific Plans Inc. to its customers (PDI, 5/18/05), I would like to question the validity of the the data he used to refute PPI's argument that the company was a victim of the rising tuition fees in private schools. De Quiros cited the Parents Enabling Parents' assertion that tuition fee increases by private schools from 2000 to 2005 reached only an average of 11.37 percent, a far cry from the 40 percent cited by PPI as the average total tuition fee increase for the last decade. CHED (Commission on Higher Education) data show that for SY 2004-2005 alone, the average percentage increase in tuition ranged from 8 percent to 18 percent.

Most private universities and colleges, especially the "big names" which are usually preferred by education planholders, take advantage of the maximum annual rate of tuition fee increase allowed by the law, which is 10 percent. These schools also take advantage of the technicality that the 10-percent ceiling is imposed only on the basic tuition fees, which means that they can "make a killing" by increasing their miscellaneous fees unashamedly. Personally, I know of a university which has more than doubled its tuition fee in just a span of five years.

That's a compounding growth rate of 15 percent annually. This university has also consistently been among the country's top 1,000 corporations. And from personal inquiries, I think that this university is not alone in exhibiting similar statistics when it comes to tuition fee increases. While De Quiros has rightfully condemned the unprofessional and unethical behavior of the troubled preneed firms in the education industry, I would also love to see him condemn the private educational institutions whose unbounded greed has made life miserable, not only for a measly number of planholders but also for a much, much larger number of people who only desired to enjoy the benefits of higher education.

—ERWIN RAFAEL,
1578-C 8th St.,
Fabie Estate, Paco, Manila

Conception, death and things in between

COMMENTARY

Fr. Ferdinand Santos, Ph.D.

"THE CULTURE of life" and "the culture of death" are phrases coined by the late John Paul II to describe tendencies in contemporary society that either promote life or lead to its depreciation. In his work, "The Gospel of Life," John Paul described what he saw as the biggest threat to humanity today: a monumental debasement of life through drugs, war and arms, abortion, euthanasia, destruction of the environment and the unjust distribution of wealth. These, he said are often caused and supported by economic, social and political structures that do not promote life, but actually conspire against it. Decrying this as a "culture of death," he called on everyone to promote its antithesis, a "culture of life."

This way of viewing the human condition is a radically holistic one. It sees life in its totality, not from a diminished perspective that fragments and compartmentalizes it. Hence, the promotion of a "culture of life" involves upholding the dignity of life in all its stages, from birth to death and every single stage in between. It means that while life begins at conception, its protection shouldn't end there. While it ends with natural death, its defense cannot begin only when one is near that point. And while improving the "quality of life" is important in safeguarding human dignity, it is an impoverishment of our very humanity when life's initial and terminal stages are reduced to contingencies that have no significance beyond subjective whim.

It is really unfortunate then that John Paul's comprehensive view has been broken up lately and the two phrases he coined are sometimes bandied about like slogans in defense of a more truncated understanding of life. This explains to a great extent, why Christian activism is currently split between those who believe they are promoting life but choose to focus their efforts on beginning and end-of-life issues and those who see these as of secondary importance to the more pressing middle-of-life issues of peace and social justice.

It also explains that odd statement describing John Paul II as "theologically conservative," but "liberal" on social justice issues. By this was meant that while the Pope championed social justice, he was also against abortion and the entire gamut of issues usually identified with it, a position called "paradoxical" by some, if not downright "contradictory"—as if the rejection of social injustice and the acceptance of abortion at the same time wouldn't be.

In reality, the Church's teaching on life is neither contradictory nor paradoxical, but represents an ever-widening thrust toward coherence and consistency. The dignity of the human person, understood in its totality, demands a consistent ethic of life. This requires the creation and promotion of social structures and policies that support the total development of persons, from birth to death, and every phase in between.

To be consistent, an ethic that promotes life speaks and acts against any practice that reduces life to a mere object. This would include abortion, euthanasia, war and the death penalty, sexism and an entire range of dehumanizing issues. But it also speaks and acts on behalf of affordable education and health care, just wages, humane working conditions, social and economic security, sustainable development, peace and the promotion of community, as well as care for the environment.

The promotion of a "culture of life" demands the support of a consistent ethic, not a fragmentary version that devalues life. Such an ethic is founded on the God-given value of each person in every stage and area of life. It is the only adequate and realistic point of orientation for the creation of programs and policies that recognize and uphold the inherent dignity of the human person.

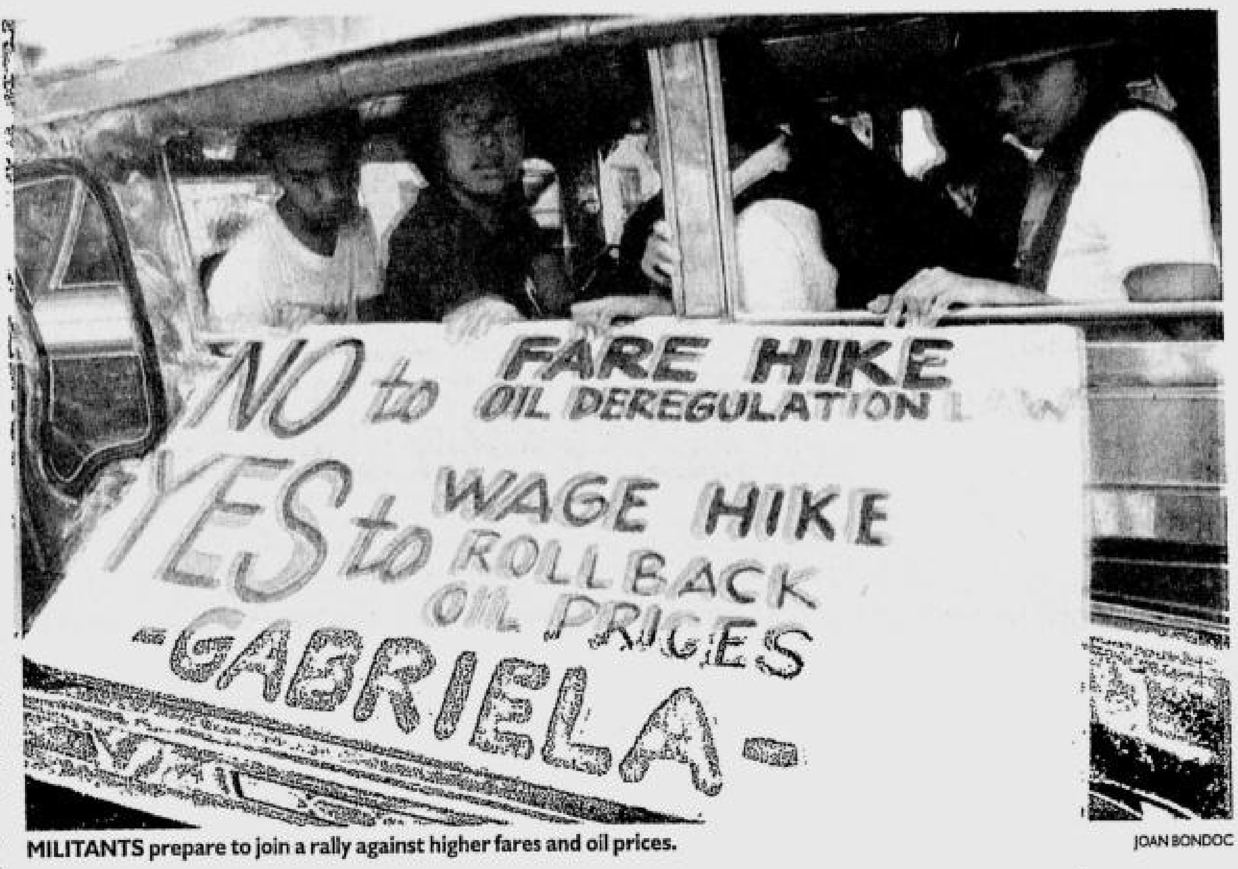
The Church's teaching on the value and sanctity of life is a "seamless garment" that cannot simply be cut up to fit specific and usually self-serving agendas. Any view that does so is ultimately self-defeating. Consider for instance the inconsistency prevalent in the First World between liberals who champion social justice but consider the right to abortion sacrosanct and conservatives who go hoarse screaming against physician-assisted suicide but have no qualms buying shoes made in Third-World sweatshops run with child labor.

Neither are these First-World inconsistencies peculiar to it. The Philippines is rife with them. After all, a society where the majority of children already born malnourished will not even finish grade school and stand very little chance of leading full lives is not a society that respects life. A society where many who are poor suffer actual hunger and cannot even afford medicines they need to sustain themselves is not a society that values life. A society where an individual can simply be shot while finishing a meal in a restaurant or strangled to death in her home is not a society that protects life. A society where journalists are murdered for pursuing the truth that their profession dictates they must do is not a society that allies itself with life.

A society where the wealthy believe their responsibility to others is fulfilled once they've thrown their scraps to the poor is not a society that promotes life. A society whose civil and religious leaders pay lip service to fighting a "culture of death," all the while conniving—knowingly or otherwise—with each other's corruption by turning a blind eye to the other's omissions is not a society that is on the side of life. A society that claims to promote a "culture of life" despite contrary structures and policies is a fraud, a sham, and is bound to self-destruct. And no amount of pro-life rhetoric will change that.

* * *

Fr. Ferdinand Santos is a priest of the Diocese of Cubao and is a professor of philosophy and theology at Providence College in Rhode Island, USA. He has also taught at the Ateneo de Manila, De La Salle University and San Carlos Seminary and served briefly as chaplain at the University of the Philippines in Diliman.



MILITANTS prepare to join a rally against higher fares and oil prices.

JOAN BONDOC

Barefaced exploitation of people

OUR leaders, especially those who speak for Malacañang, may be forgetting that the majority of Filipinos can hardly afford the "two-peso worth of text messages" they equated with the fare hike.

For some, it might indeed be "just" the worth of two text messages that allows us the warmth of a laugh or a chat amid dehumanizing living conditions. It might just be the price of one cigarette stick that makes the stomach forget the hunger, or of one piece of *pandesal* that we could barely afford to start the day.

For the many jobless and homeless Filipinos, the indifference, with which the leadership of this country has dismissed the fare hike, was an insult. Even the few luxuries our P2 can still afford have now been taken away from us, this as we have yet to see the wage hike promised by the President. Still, our hopes are guarded, for the President clearly said the wage hike would only allow workers to "somewhat cope" with the increasing prices of commodities and no more. We doubt if the President has any more guts to displease her much-valued investors, whose threats of moving to Vietnam or China have for decades tied this so-called sovereign state in a leash.

By belittling the effects of a P2-increase in jeepney fare, bureaucrats have shown how little they know and understand about the harsh life of the generally poor Filipinos. Sitting comfortably in their rising towers, wearing rose-colored glasses, how could they? They have chosen instead to remain in a state of complete denial of the fact that the majority of the people in this country live in hand-to-mouth-existence. Meanwhile, the workers, whose hands make this economy run and survive, suffer from every decrease in the value of the peso and from unjust wages and deplorable working conditions.

Some might say it's too late for finger-pointing, but amid the crisis that is taxing the common people's patience, who can resist blaming the government for deregulating and privatizing such basic and vital utilities as water, electricity, health and education, and oil?

As if in direct insult to the people, oil companies, such as Exxon Mobil Corp. and Shell Group of Companies, trumpeted their soaring profits for this year. The LibertyPost.org reported on April 28 that "Exxon Mobil Corp., the world's largest publicly traded oil company, posted a 44 percent profit gain." CNN.com also reported on the same day that "Royal Dutch/Shell, the world's third-largest oil group, reported on Thursday a 28-percent rise in first-quarter profits that beat consensus forecasts, helped by surging oil prices."

Shame! What an injustice! What a barefaced exploitation of the people! Need I say more?

—MAY VARGAS,
executive director,
National Minority Resource Center-
Tunay na Alyansa ng Bayan Alay sa
Katutubo (NMRC-Tabak),
Mapagbigay Street, Brgy. Pinyahan,
Diliman, Quezon City,
tabakphils@yahoo.com

Peace impossible if truth is hidden

ANOTHER journalist was killed right after it was reported in the newspapers that the Philippines has become the most dangerous place for journalists.

It seems that those behind the killings mock us and our law enforcers. In the last three years, 23 journalists have been killed. At the same time, political activists have also been targeted. In the first quarter of this year alone, more than 20 have fallen.

Will more killings silence more bearers of the truth and annihilate vocal opposition to government?

There is suspicion that powerful people and interests are behind the killings of journalists. There is suspicion, too, that government forces are involved or abet the killings of political activists. And it is for these reasons, many believe, that a lot of the cases remain unsolved.

The rampant killings cast doubt on the government's commitment to democracy. The killings of journalists highlight the government's inability to protect its people, while the murders of political activists reveal its disdain for the opposition of the Left variety.

The culture of impunity must be put to an end. The perpetrators and the masterminds must be brought before the bars of justice. There will never be peace in our land so long as dissent and opposition are stifled, so long as the news and truth are hidden.

Evelyn Beatriz Hall, Voltaire's biographer once wrote, "I disapprove of what you say, but I will defend to the death your right to say it."

It just might well be that we will have to defend to the death our rights and freedoms as our government is unable to do so.

—EC AMISTAD,
Deputy Director for Operations—Luzon,
Task Force Detainees
of the Philippines

Abandoned province

EVERY TIME I read articles about provinces where tourist spots abound and are being developed, and the people are being praised to high heavens for their hospitality, it pains me so much. Why? Because the province of Northern Samar where I come from is not wanting of this virtue, and yet it is never given the limelight except when the New People's Army stage an ambush, kill soldiers and policemen, and ransack a town in the province, carting away high-powered guns.

I've asked myself: Is our province so depressed and God-forsaken that not one tourist spot catches the attention of the concerned authorities?

We also have representatives and a governor. But why is Samar so neglected? Our province is not without a tourist spot that can be developed. We have places that can put our province in the ranks of provinces with beautiful tourist destinations like Bohol, Cebu, Palawan, Pangasinan and Aklan (Boracay), to mention a few.

Again, I ask: What are the priorities of our representatives and governor? Is it the welfare of the province or self-aggrandizement? Your guess is as good as mine.

Where did their pork barrel allocations go that, in the last 15 years, not even one farm-to-market road has been constructed? What really are their priorities in clinging to their positions?

Are Samareños happy with the present situation? Look how our public officials have neglected and abandoned Northern Samar. Before martial law, during the incumbency of the late Rep. Eladio T. Balite, the port of San Jose was converted into a national port of entry. This is now an abandoned port and the water is very shallow that not a single passenger ship can dock at the port.

During martial law, the Del Valle brothers were in command and control of Northern Samar, courtesy of Jose Roño. The younger Del Valle was appointed as governor and, later, ran for assemblyman. His elder brother ran for governor and won, but not a single project was constructed except the cementing of the streets of their town of San Jose.

After martial law, Raul Daza came back to claim his old position as representative, holding on to it for nine years without anything to show for it. While he was in Congress, Harlen Abayon served as governor (also nine long years). After their third terms, they switched positions: Daza is now the governor and Abayon is the representative.

After 15 long years of the Daza-Abayon tandem, Northern Samar is still not thriving but sinking deeper into the quagmire of misfortune brought about by sheer neglect and abandonment. Who's to blame for this?

—WENS JOMAO-AS,
Blk. L-2, Lot 6, Baranagay Emmanuel,
Dasmariñas, Cavite

Solution to chaotic traffic problem found

SOONER than later, the chaotic traffic problem in Metro Manila will be solved even without the Metro Manila Development Authority lifting a finger.

And who's the solution provider? The exorbitant, skyrocketing prices of petroleum products. Because of this grim reality, vehicle owners especially those from lower economic groups will be forced to "abandon" their motor vehicles and just use the public transport system (jeepneys, buses, etc.).

But the problem is: the government has allowed the transport groups another round of fare increase. So, it is a situation where Juan de la Cruz finds himself "between the devil and the deep blue sea."

—PAUL R. MORTEL,
MBLA Court, Malanday,
Marikina City

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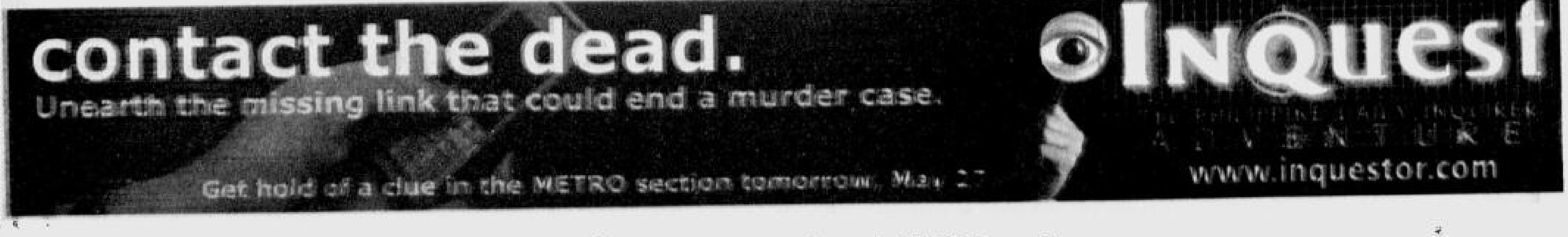
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Cigarette exec says smuggling 2-pronged

ITOGON, Benguet—There are simple ways of smuggling that we are not aware of.

Chris Nelson, managing director of Philip Morris Philippines Inc., said they are hit by two-pronged smuggling. One is the usual way in which cigarettes, particularly premium brands, are smuggled out in huge quantities by big-time smugglers. Some even make counterfeit cigarettes and sell them outside the country.

Another way, according to Nelson, is buying huge numbers of cigarettes in warehouses and then amassing enough before distributing them abroad.

"I've seen some of our cigarettes in Mongolia to as far as the Carribean," said Nelson.

He said it is very easy to identify which are their products. Not only do they have "Made In the Philippines" but also "For Domestic Sale. Not for Export" signs.

Nelson said their P300 million manufacturing facility in Batangas began exporting in July 2003. Of the 28 billion cigarette sticks made in their facility, seven billion are exported to Thailand only.

Nelson said their cigarettes for domestic market should not be sold outside the Philippines because they have more specific standards in nicotine, for example, although the standards are the same.

He said they tried to curb this particular kind of smuggling by setting limits of sale but it remains unprevented.

Nelson declined to give figures on the extent of cigarette smuggling in the country.

But in the recent deliberations of the Senate ways and means committee, Sen. Ralph Recto estimated that P7.5 billion is lost to smuggling not only of cigarettes but also of alcohol annually. *Frank Cimatu, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

School execs say teachers hooked on gambling also

MATI, Davao Oriental—Education officials here have admitted that teachers, too, place their bets on the illegal numbers game Last Two.

Johnny Lopez, officer-in-charge of the Department of Education in Davao Oriental, said that low pay has enticed teachers to try their luck in Last Two.

Last Two is based on the last digits of the last two balls drawn in the daily lotto.

On some occasions, the winning numbers are based on the result of the Philippine Charity Sweeptakes Office's 6-Digits game.

Depending on the financier, bettors would win P600 to P700 per P10 play.

"Yes, there are public school teachers who are hooked to Last Two and it's all because they are lowly paid," Lopez said.

Lopez, who admitted that he too would sometimes bet, said that teachers "could hardly make both ends meet" with their present salaries.

"They bet on the illegal numbers game in the hope of augmenting their meager income. We cannot blame them for that," he said.

Lopez said that because people hope they could get bigger amounts for every bet they place, the government's antigambling drive would have a hard time succeeding.

"We could not stop Last Two," he said.

Lopez said instead of trying to curb illegal gambling, particularly Last Two, the government should instead make it legal.

"If the government doesn't want the public school teachers to be hooked on illegal gambling, they should increase the salary of public school teachers," he said.

Lopez admitted that teachers should lead by example but said he could not prevent them from betting.

Reynaldo Angelitud, former schools division superintendent, said that teachers should not justify their involvement in illegal gambling because it is wrong in the first place.

"It's simply not right," he said.

Speaking for the first time on the jueteng controversy, the 22 mayors in Pampanga, the home province of President Macapagal-Arroyo, said they wanted the illegal numbers game stopped in their areas.

The Pampanga Mayors' League, in a statement on Tuesday, also clarified that the league's members were not yet pushing for the legalization of jueteng.

The mayors said they fully support the all-out war that the President has earlier declared against illegal gambling.

They expressed this through Resolution No. 27 where they want a "stronger policy to stamp out this problem that corrupts the moral fibers of the society." *Ferdinand O. Zuasola, PDI Mindanao Bureau and Tonette Orejas, PDI Central Luzon Desk*

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Power firm told to reduce rates by P2 per kwh

By Nestor P. Burgos Jr.
PDI Visayas Bureau

ILOILO CITY—The Energy Regulatory Commission (ERC) has upheld its earlier decision ordering the Panay Electric Co. (Peco) to unbundle its rates and reduce its charges by around P2 per kilowatt-hour.

The reduction would benefit around 40,000 consumers of Peco, the sole power distributor of Iloilo City's 180 barangays.

In a six-page order released on May 12, the ERC denied the second motion for consideration filed by Peco on March 7.

The motion for reconsideration sought a reversal of the May 19, 2004 ruling of the commission, which ordered the electric company to implement the unbundling of rate and lower its charge from around P7 to P5 per kwh.

In denying the motion, the ERC said Peco merely reiterated the issues raised in its first motion for reconsideration filed on June 30, 2004 and denied by the ERC on Jan. 19.

The commission also pointed out that Peco could be considered engaged in "forum shopping" when it filed a motion for extension to file a petition for review before the Court of Appeals.

Forum shopping is committed when a party to a case avails judicial remedies in several venues simultaneously or in succession.

Peco later filed a notice of withdrawal of its petition before the CA. The notice is still pending before the appellate court.

In its ruling, the ERC ordered Peco to implement the May 19, 2004 order "without further delay, otherwise, appropriate sanctions shall be imposed."

The order was signed by the ERC chair Rodolfo Albano and commissioners Jesus Alcordo, Rauf Tan and Alejandro Barin.

The INQUIRER tried to get the company's side. But a staff at the Peco office said its public relations officer, Carlos Borja, is on leave.

Lawyer Romeo Gerochi, president of the Environmental Consumers Network Inc. and the Freedom from Debt Coalition-Iloilo, hailed the ERC ruling.

"They (Peco) have no other recourse but to implement the order," said Gerochi who has filed several cases against the electric firm.

Gerochi asked consumers to present their unpaid bills and asked for reassessment of charges using the new rate.

He said he would also file a motion at the ERC, seeking an order that would require Peco to refund its consumers the excess in charges from July 1, 2004 when the ERC order on the unbundling of rate and reduction of charges should have taken effect.

Around P800 million should be refunded to Peco consumers, said Gerochi.

The lawyer also filed a case against Peco, demanding the electric firm to refund its consumers amounting from P11 million to P100 million for charging unauthorized expenses through its generation charges since 1989.

Gerochi also accused Peco of overcharging its consumers by jacking up its generation cost and including expenses not related to the generation of electricity.

According to records submitted by Peco to the ERC, Gerochi said the company includes employee benefits, contributions to the Social Security System and Philippine Health Insurance Corp., among others, in the computation of the generation charge.

In an order dated Feb. 14, 1999, the Energy Regulatory Board (ERB), ERC's precursor, directed Peco to refund its consumers P841,381.20 for overcharges. The ERB order said some of the expenses should be excluded from the generation charge.

GRIM TASK
Rescuers carry the body of one of four pilots who died after a Philippine Air Force training plane crashed in Baguio City. AP

ROUNDUP

Farmer faces charges

BACOLOD CITY—A farmer is facing multiple parricide charges for allegedly hacking to death his wife and two young children inside their home in Kabankalan City, Negros Occidental. The police filed the complaint against Rodito Maglasang, 30, at the Kabankalan prosecutor's office on Tuesday, two days after he surrendered to a barangay official in Dumaguete City, Negros Oriental. The police said Rodito allegedly killed wife Mia, 25 and sons Rommel, 4 and Ariel, 1, on May 17 in a fit of jealousy but the suspect denied it. Police investigator Perfecto Larracas said a frustrated murder complaint was also being prepared against Rodito for allegedly hacking Francisco Pasionela, Mia's father, when he tried to rescue his daughter and two grandchildren. Rodito told police he felt insulted by the statements of his father-in-law that he was "irresponsible."

Carla Gomez, PDI Visayas Bureau

Geothermal exploration

DAUIN, Negros Oriental—The Philippine National Oil Company-Energy Development Corp. (PNOC-EDC) will resume its exploration in Barangay Magsaysay this year at a cost of $1.5 to $2 million. PNOC-EDC president Paul Aquino said the company was set to dig another hole and reexamine one of the two holes earlier found to be positive with geothermal steam but was acidic. Aquino said the PNOC-EDC conducted a geothermal exploration in Dauin in the early 1980s. One of the two holes was dry and the other was acidic. Aquino said there appears to be geothermal resource in Dauin. "The question is how substantial," he said. He said that with modern technology, acidity can be remedied or might have been dissipated already through time.

Romy Amarado, PDI Visayas Bureau

DOH clears drug firm

URDANETA CITY—The Department of Health has cleared a pharmaceutical company of charges of dispensing counterfeit antibiotics to district hospitals in Pangasinan. This came after findings showed that the hot temperature had affected the products especially the antibiotics of PhilPharmawealth Inc., official distributor of benzyl penicillin sodium to 14 district hospitals in the province. Benzyl penicillin is used to treat pneumonia and upper respiratory tract infections. Dr. Reynado Jacinto, chief of the standards and regulation division of the Center for Health Development in San Fernando, La Union, has blamed the hot weather for the samples' non-solubility. Villar said after examining seven out of 889 vials, the drug would not dissolve in distilled water. The team has recommended the upgrading of the facility. *Nemesio de la Cruz, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

Driver found dead

LA TRINIDAD, Benguet—A taxicab driver was found dead in Barangay Alno here last week. Police said Macario Metua, 57, had nine stab wounds in the body. His cab, with body mark "PP Taxi" and plate AVK 591, was missing, police said. Metua's body was found by residents in Sitio Pilawan, Alno at 5 a.m. on May 19.

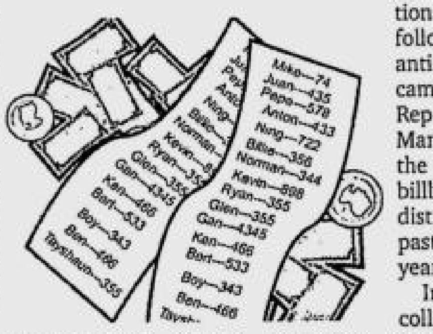
Elmer Christian Daulgoy, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

'Jueteng' persists in North, Central Luzon towns

By PDI Northern Luzon Bureau and Central Luzon Desk

BAGUIO CITY—Ask *jueteng cobradores* (bet collectors), local officials and policemen in several towns and cities in Northern and Central Luzon, and they'll say that *jueteng* operations have stopped.

However, some residents who patronize *jueteng* in some of these areas said operations never really stopped, as they continued on betting on small-time operators.



Cordillera

Jueteng operations reportedly ended on April 28 in Baguio City and La Trinidad, Benguet, and in other areas in Northern Luzon.

In past incidents when *jueteng* operations stopped in Baguio, a "guerrilla version" usually appears after a month but no such incident has been reported in the city.

But in Benguet, a farmer in Buguias town and another bettor in Mankayan town confirmed that *jueteng* never stopped in their areas.

According to the farmer, the operations in Buguias are maintained by an operator who runs the game independently from big time operators. In Mankayan, a bettor said a van regularly comes to the town to collect bets.

INQUIRER sources said there are no *jueteng* operations in Bontoc, Mt. Province, but another illegal numbers game operating there is the "Last Two," which uses the final digits of televised basketball games.

Northern Luzon

Jueteng operations have stopped in most towns of Cagayan on Sunday following President Macapagal-Arroyo's warning that she would dismiss any local or police official who would fail to stop *jueteng*, officials and residents in various towns told the INQUIRER.

Teachers based in the northernmost town of Aparri said *jueteng* stopped abruptly on Sunday in the town and in nearby Buguey, Camalaniugan, Gattaran and Lallo towns.

Operations also stopped in Sanchez Mira and Lasam towns.

The sources said operations in these areas are centralized in Aparri, where the supposed financier is based. They said when *jueteng* stops in Aparri, the other areas soon follow.

In Tuguegarao City, *jueteng* stopped since 2003 when a suspected *jueteng* operator in the city was killed.

In the province's third district, *jueteng* operations stopped following the anti-jueteng campaign of Rep. Manuel Mamba through the radio and billboards in the district in the past several years.

In Ilocos Sur, collectors said *jueteng* operations stopped in the province in late April when illegal gambling again dominated media reports.

Manong Berto, a *cobrador* for 10 years now, said there were instructions "from above (sa itaas)" to stop *jueteng* operations. "There was an order to stop it so we cannot disobey it," he said.

He said this was the longest period that *jueteng* operations had stopped in the province and the drive seemed to be "serious and real." He said he was forced to return to driving a tricycle after *jueteng* stopped.

A *jueteng* table manager, who has been in the business for 15 years now, said operators did not want to risk reviving even guerrilla-type operations.

"No one is brave enough to do that," he told the INQUIRER. He said draws in guerrilla-type operations were held either in a cemetery, running vehicles or in the middle of a farm.

In Nueva Vizcaya, *cobradores* on Monday stopped collecting *jueteng* bets in Solano, Bayombong, Bagabag and Bambang towns where *jueteng* operated in the past three weeks.

A police source said *jueteng* here stopped in late April following the INQUIRER exposé that linked members of the First Family to *jueteng* operations.

But operations resumed and again peaked after Bishop Ramon Villena left the province for Mexico on May 11.

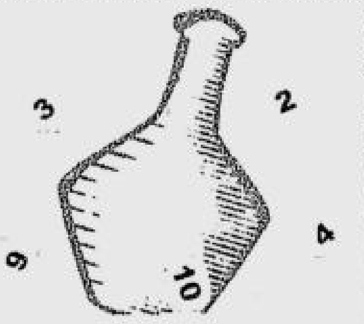
"It stopped again," said a bet collector in Barangay Salvacion in Bayombong.

"But [our managers] told us that it's temporary and that hopefully, it will be back in no time, like when this present controversy has cooled down," he said.

Solano Councilor Michael Tiongson said *jueteng* also stopped in the town after operating for the past three weeks. He said he used to see draws being held at the Pacursa Subdivision in Barangay Roxas.

"It stopped late last month, but resumed three days later. When I saw the draws, I immediately notified the [acting] chief of police but there was no action," he said, referring to Chief Insp. Francisco Palattao Jr.

Jueteng also stopped in Quirino province. According to a retired grade schoolteacher in Barangay Gundaway in Cabarroguis town, she did not see on Monday the *cobradores* who usually converged in front of her store before leaving for *jueteng* draws in another area in the town.



A tricycle driver, who doubles as a bet collector in Cabarroguis, said police on Sunday night raided a suspected *jueteng* den in Barangay Bannawag, near the Isabela-Quirino border.

In Pangasinan, the operations of *jueteng* in Malasiqui and Basista towns have not resumed since it stopped last month.

However, a few enterprising collectors in Malasiqui have resorted to collecting bets for yet another illegal numbers game "loteng," where the winning 11-number combination is based on the daily result of the government-run lotto operations.

A woman *jueteng* bet collector now involved in *loteng* said they remit collections to an operator in Dagupan City.

In Isabela, *jueteng* operations have continued in some towns as some collectors continued to accept bets.

This contradicted statements of police officials in the province that the game has been stopped.

Ricardo and Orlando Olla, both *jueteng* bet takers in Barangay Alibagu in Ilagan, said they were hoping that *jueteng* operations in their area would resume soon so they could earn for their families.

Ricardo returned to tricycle driving, where he usually earns P100 a day, which was P200 lower than his daily commission from collecting *jueteng* bets.

Orlando, on the other hand, has turned to helping in farm work.

Central Luzon

In Bataan, the game surfaces once in a while and a source said this was because the suspected financier, Rodolfo "Bong" Pineda, has not heeded the P2-million weekly demand of a top provincial official.

In Angeles City, Pampanga, *jueteng* persisted in the biggest village, Balibago, until last week. In Macabebe town, draws were reported held early morning and ran by a local official.

In Olongapo City, a certain Echie, who managed *jueteng* operations reportedly financed by one Aguing from Malabon City, used *loteng* as a cover for *jueteng*.

Chief Supt. Alejandro Lapinid, Central Luzon police director, said the Regional Anti-illegal Gambling Special Operations Task Force was formed this month to thwart the resurgence of *jueteng* that has rocked the Arroyo administration.

Since January, the police have launched 267 raids in which 685 people were arrested, 244 cases filed in courts and P395,544.90 in bets confiscated.

In Tarlac, collectors continue to take bets even in government offices.

In Bulacan, Pacita Abaygar, 58, said *jueteng* bet collectors like her have been displaced after operations stopped early this month.

Abaygar, a *jueteng* collector for 15 years now in Bulacan town, said the operation of *jueteng* in the province had stopped due to the police crackdown. *Reports from Frank Cimatu, Leoncio Balbin Jr., Melvin Gascon, Villamor Visaya Jr., Eric Montoya and Estanislao Caldez, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau, and Tonette Orejas, Jun Malig, Carmela Reyes, Cesar Villa, Anselmo Roque and Ronaldo Dizon, PDI Central Luzon Desk*

Group of councilors gives backing to anti-'jueteng' campaign

THE HEAD of a nationwide group of councilors expressed support for President Macapagal-Arroyo's campaign against jueteng and graft.

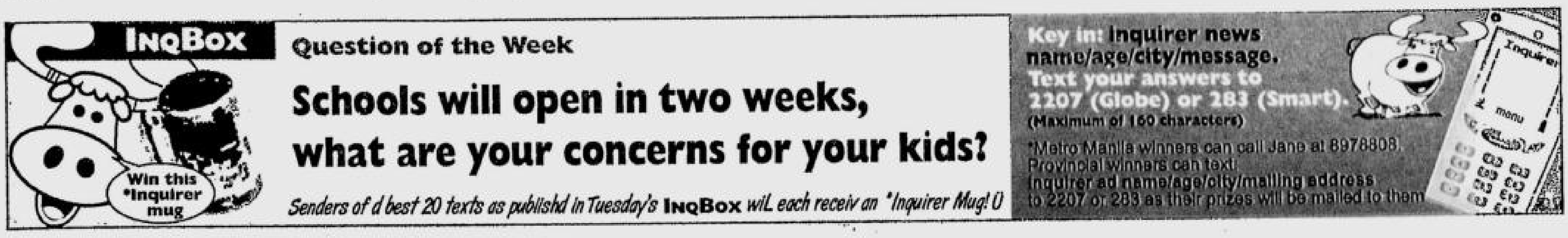
Carlos Fortuna, Mandaue City councilor and head of the 16,000-strong Philippine Councilors' League, also asked Congress to focus on reforms instead of investigating reports linking top officials to jueteng.

Fortuna, also secretary general of the Union of Local Authorities of the Philippines representing some 1.5 million local officials and employees, said accusers should go to court instead of bringing their case to media or to highly publicized legislative hearings.

"They should shut up," said Fortuna in a press statement. "Such reckless attempts to undermine the credibility of the President will never bring any good to either those who wish to destabilize the government and those who maybe convinced by these allegations."

Fortuna said that the political instability resulting from the wild accusations against the first family will indeed bring political gains to those who wish to remove the present leadership, but it will never be a triumph for the masses who will surely suffer the repercussions of a battered economy and a country torn apart.

"We urge our people to approach with caution these allegations, to exercise prudence and sobriety," he said.


INQBOX Question of the Week
Schools will open in two weeks, what are your concerns for your kids?
Senders of d best 20 texts as publishd in Tuesday's INQBOX wiL each receiv an "Inquirer Mug! ()
Key in: Inquirer news name/age/city/message.
Text your answers to 2207 (Globe) or 283 (Smart).
(Maximum of 160 characters)
*Metro Manila winners can call Jane at 8978808.
Provincial winners can text:
Inquirer ad name/age/city/mailing address
to 2207 or 283 as their prizes will be mailed to them

Baby death rate highest in 2 regions in Visayas

By Nestor P. Burgos Jr.
PDI Visayas Bureau

CEBU CITY—More babies in Central and Western Visayas are dying before they reach a year old, results of the 2003 National Demographic Health Survey (NDHS) showed.

The survey, conducted every five years, showed that 28 infants die out of every 1,000 live births in Central Visayas while 39 infants out of every 1,000 live births in Western Visayas do not reach one year old.

The figures are higher than that of the 1998 NDHS, which reported an infant mortality rate of 24 infants out 1,000 live births in Central Visayas and 26 infants out of 1,000 live births in Western Visayas.

Central Visayas covers the provinces of Cebu, Bohol and Negros Oriental and Siquijor while Western Visayas includes the provinces of Negros Occidental, Guimaras, Iloilo, Aklan, Capiz and Antique.

Officials of the Commission on Population and the Department of Health presented the survey results during a recent Visayas-wide media briefing in this city.

Mortality

The NDHS also showed that more infants die before reaching the age of five with 39 deaths out of 1,000 infants in Central Visayas and 50 out of 1,000 in Western Visayas. These are higher than the 38 recorded in 1998 for Central Visayas and 42 in Western Visayas.

Infant and child mortality is higher among babies born to women who are considered having high-risk pregnancies.

These are pregnant women below 18 years old or older than 35 years old and those with birth intervals of less than three years.

Physicians recommend an interval of three to five years between births for the mothers' health to recuperate, said Dolores Castillo, health assistant secretary for the Visayas and Mindanao.

Women who get pregnant after having four children and who have a poor medical and obstetrical history are also having high-risk pregnancies.

Infant deaths are more likely to occur at the seventh or more pregnancies, the survey showed.

Higher risk

Castillo said women over 35 years old with less than three years in interval between childbirth and who have many children face five times the risk in their pregnancy.

They are followed by women below 18 years old with less than three years interval between childbirth.

Infant mortality, however, significantly decreased in Eastern Visayas, covering the provinces of Biliran, Eastern Samar, Leyte, Northern Samar, Samar and Southern Leyte.

From 61 deaths out of 1,000 births in 1998, the figure is down to 32 in the 2003 survey. The number of infants dying before the age of five also has dropped from 86 to 57.

One factor in the drop in infant mortality in this region could be the significant increase in the use of family planning methods, said Mia Ventura, Popcom deputy executive director.

The use of various types of family planning methods in Eastern Visayas increased from 37.5 percent in 1998 to 44 percent in 2003.

But more women in the three Visayan regions are having more children than they desire.

The highest figure is in Eastern Visayas where women are having two children more than they want.

SURIGAO ARMY OFFENSIVE

Villagers come home to uncertain peace

LIANGA, Surigao del Sur—Residents of villages that became battlefields during recent military operations in the Andap Valley Complex have started to trek back home but said they were anxious about human rights violations by soldiers.

At least 1,500 people fled their homes when the military launched a series of operations against New People's Army (NPA) rebels in the complex, which traverses parts of San Agustin, Marihatag, San Miguel and this town since late last month.

More than a dozen soldiers and rebels have died in the clashes that the military said was a victory for the government's anti-insurgency campaign.

During a dialogue on Tuesday with Jesus Dureza, presidential assistant for Mindanao, the evacuees said they agreed to return to their homes even though they fear military abuses.

They said a number of male villagers remained missing after they were taken into custody by the military during the operations.

Most of them, they said, could not be located.

The evacuees also complained of torture allegedly committed by the military.

Dureza said he would evaluate all the complaints he received and would take appropriate action on these.

Luz Amahan, 63, later told the INQUIRER that her son Joel, 31, a father of four, remained missing after soldiers took him on May 7.

SOME of the evacuees returning home aboard a truck.

DENNIS JAY SANTOS/PDI MINDANAO BUREAU

Amahan said her son was mistaken for an NPA rebel.

"I guess he was taken [by the military] because they wanted him to pinpoint the whereabouts of the NPA rebels," she said.

Siniang Siscon, 64, said two of her children, Arnold and Joel, could still not be located after soldiers apprehended them. Siscon said other young men from their village had also been taken into custody, beaten and later released by soldiers.

She said the military wanted the male villagers to confess that they were rebels.

Military officials who were present during the dialogue were quick to deny the allegations.

"We could not afford to do that," Col. Leonardo Cawiling, executive officer of the Army's 402nd Infantry Brigade, told the evacuees in reaction to allegations of human rights abuses by soldiers.

He said the military is not an enemy but a protector of the civilians. *Dennis Jay Santos, PDI, Mindanao Bureau*

Baguio plans training on 'customer relations'

BAGUIO CITY—In a bid to boost this city's tourism industry, the Baguio Tourism Council has included in its programs the training of taxi drivers, street sweepers and traffic policemen on customer relations.

The council considers the three groups as "frontliners of local tourism" and hence, its members said, they should be adequately trained on how to deal properly with local and foreign visitors.

"It's not that they are not good but their daily chores require them to be visible on the streets and their presence alone would make them vital components of the city's thrust to regain the reputation as the number one destination [in the country]," said Leonarda Aguinalde, dean of the University of the Cordilleras' (UC) college of business administration here.

Aguinalde represented the academe in the task force that the tourism council formed to formulate a recovery program for the city.

GOOD DAY! WELCOME TO BAGUIO!
TAXI

She said training policemen, taxi drivers and street sweepers on customer or public relations will make them realize that they have a role in building the city's image and become part of the council's advocacy for "a culture of tourism."

The training kicked off last month when the Hotel and Restaurant Association of Baguio gathered 54 taxicab drivers to orient them on customer courtesy.

They were taught how to deal properly with their passengers, particularly first time travelers to the city, Aguinalde said.

Recently, Aguinalde said, the UC completed the training of 80 street sweepers on public relations, work ethics and values formation.

Next week, it will be the turn of the city's traffic policemen.

Councilor Perlita Rondez, a member of the task force, said the traffic policemen would also undergo a seminar on how to deal properly with local or foreign tourists.

The task force decided to include traffic policemen in the training following incidents of heated arguments in the past between motorists and traffic policemen on the enforcement of the color coding scheme, Rondez said.

The city police force has 33 traffic policemen and 18 support members.

Insp. Samuel Bumangil, traffic division deputy head, welcomed the proposed training, saying "it will add a new dimension to the traffic policeman's character as a law enforcer."

Aguinalde said the training is a means to empower the three groups to become partners of the tourism industry. "They represent a community which often comes into contact with tourists and travelers who may ask for locations, destinations or directions," she said. *Delmar Cariño, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

Payoffs keep Mindoro illegal logging alive, say officials

CITY OF CALAPAN—The Task Force Bantay Kalikasan (TFBK) confiscated more than 2,000 board feet of illegally cut trees in three batches in the past two weeks.

On May 23, TFBK volunteers led by retired Senior Supt. Maximo Evora, TFBK enforcement officer, and PO2 Jerico Ocampo, of the 411th Provincial Police Mobile Group, confiscated 521 board feet of illegal lumber in Uyaw, Roxas town.

The lumber pieces were loaded in an unregistered public utility jeep, Evora said.

He added that 1,002 board feet were confiscated in La Fortuna, Socorro; 569 in Barangay Biga, Calapan City, which came from Tacligan, San Teodoro; and 279.9 in the upper portion of Salong owned by a millionaire.

A very reliable source said illegal cutting of trees continues because of commissions being paid to authorities.

The pay is P1 per board foot to environment, police, Army and local government officials, according to the source.

"The big bosses have also to check on their people of the lower ranks as they could be getting commissions, like a Cafgu member in Merit, Victoria," the source added.

With the commission, the illegal operator could actually be earning less, the source said.

Earlier, Col. Ralph Villanueva, 204th Infantry Brigade commander, told the INQUIRER that their position on illegal logging was non-negotiable.

Some of the soldiers had to file charges against illegal logging operators for failure of other authorities to do so, according to documents seen by the INQUIRER.

Police authorities will serve a warrant of arrest issued by Judge Rolando Caguete to a former Sangguniang Kabataan of Malabo, Victoria town for fishing with "kuryente" in Naujan Lake.

"We're determined to curb illegal logging and illegal fishing. I also tell the Mangyans that they will not be spared," Evora said after his lecture to the natives in Bongabong town.

The multisectoral TFBK was organized in February by Oriental Mindoro Gov. Arnan Panaligan after it was recommended by the Pastoral Care Council led by Oriental Mindoro Bishop Warlito Cajandig. *Madonna Virola, PDI, Southern Luzon Bureau*

Solon slams customs' 'arrogance' to used car trade

A LEGISLATOR has accused the customs bureau of showing arrogance and disrespect toward the second hand vehicle import industry, a huge revenue generating industry.

Rep. Milagros Magsaysay, in a statement on her privilege speech in the House of Representatives, said she strongly denounces the "egotistical attitude" of customs officials during a meeting with second hand vehicle importers last May 13.

During that meeting, she said customs officials "denigrated" the very industry that gave the bureau office in Subic a staggering amount of P736.7 million in revenues last year, the largest contribution next to oil.

Magsaysay said the customs officials refused to honor all the documents presented by the second-hand car importers to back up their claim that the industry should be excluded from the ban in importation as it has not violated Republic Act 8506 or the Right Hand Drive Law, which was the basis of the Customs Memorandum Order No. 16-2005.

CMO No. 16-2005 directs all shipping companies to refrain from accepting cargo of any right hand drive vehicles. Violators of the memorandum will be meted criminal sanctions.

Magsaysay said when customs officials were told that prices of cars would be unaffordable, the importers were simply dismissed and told that importers should just import second hand luxury vehicles so they could make some profit. *Marlon Ramos, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

House to probe Durano statement 'maligning' Boracay

By Nestor P. Burgos Jr.
PDI Visayas Bureau

ILOILO CITY—The House committee on tourism will look into the situation on Boracay Island following Tourism Secretary Joseph "Ace" Durano's statement that the island-resort is in "critical" condition.

Aklan Rep. Florencio Miraflores said the committee chaired by Bohol Rep. Edgar Chatto will find out if Durano's statement has basis.

If there is, he added, the committee will then ask the secretary's suggestions on possible solutions to the problems facing the island.

Miraflores, House committee vice chair on tourism, said the discussion on the problems and the possible solutions would help the committee in drafting a national tourism policy.

The Aklan congressman delivered a privilege speech on Monday, criticizing Durano for issuing statements that came out in the INQUIRER.

He said in his speech that Boracay "has seemingly been given the pink slip" after it has been boasted by the tourism industry as "one of the best our country can offer."

"After giving the country international fame and contributing not less than P7.8 billion [in earnings] in 2004, [Boracay] has been thrashed about as a ticking bomb," the congressman said.

Miraflores, who served three terms as Aklan governor, said Aklan officials acknowledged that the situation in Boracay raises "reasonable" alarm. " . . . But it is not to the extent that Secretary Durano alarmingly puts it."

He pointed out that the Department of Tourism has been at the forefront in marketing the island to the world. "Today it is no less than the department's secretary who is crying wolf."

While Aklanons were the immediate stakeholders of Boracay, Miraflores said addressing the problems of the island should be a national concern.

Miraflores refuted Durano's statement that the island was overcrowded, saying a 1991 study commissioned by the DOT pegged the Boracay's carrying capacity at 714,357 tourists per year.

The island, he added, could host 40 percent more tourists than it presently hosts.

Data from the DOT showed that for the first quarter of this year, tourist arrivals reached 122,742, or 18.88 percent more than the figure for the same period last year.

DURANO

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INQUIRER Southern Luzon

Hopes still high for 'lawlaw' bounty

By Bobby Q. Labalan
Magallanes, Sorsogon

EVEN cats and dogs ignore it, according to Mayor Roque Carranza of Magallanes, Sorsogon.

Carranza was referring to the thousands of "*lawlaw*" or fimbriated sardines (*Sardinella spp*) that were floating near the shores of the town on May 12. The fish is similar to but bigger and longer than the *tamban*, another sardine species sold in public markets.

Lawlaw is very tasty, especially when broiled, said Serafin Lacdang, head of the fisheries section of the provincial agriculturist's office. It is also good for *paksiw sa suka* (cooked in vinegar) or simply with salt and water, he said.

But thousands of the fish have been thrown back into the waters because fishermen have already run out of containers. No one would buy them anyway.

Since early last year, *lawlaw* catch has not diminished, Carranza said. "Our constituents have grown tired of eating it."

The municipal government is now worried that the unabated dumping of excess fish is polluting the sea. "The government, however, is helpless as there is no ordinance that bans such disposal," the mayor said.

Earlier, he gathered the barangay chairs of coastal villages to a meeting to tackle the issue of fish dumping. He requested them to advise the fishermen to stop disposing their excess catch into the sea.

Councilor Allen Arambulo, chair of the local agriculture committee, confirmed the abundance of *lawlaw* in the coastal waters between Masbate and Sorsogon.

In fact, many local entrepreneurs have bought fishing boats and nets to go into business, he said.

"At first, everyone was very happy. They always had abundant catch. And there were many buyers. Most of these entrepreneurs bought additional boats and nets to take advantage of the bounty," Arambulo narrated.

Each box of *lawlaw* (containing 35-37 kilos per box) cost P800 to P1,200.

"If you were unlucky, you would get only 12 boxes. Others got as much as 50 to 60 boxes. We really earned much," he said.

But why are they now dumping the fish?

Jose Zuñiga, fish port administrator of the adjacent town of Bulan, said many dealers had stopped buying *lawlaw* as they already had an oversupply. The fish is often traded at the Bulan port, but it is also confronted with the same problem of pollution from dumping.

One of the biggest buyers, who makes *bagoong* (fish paste) in Pangasinan, has stopped buying *lawlaw*. This has resulted in excessive supply, and each box now costs only P150 to P200. Even with the low price, there are few takers.

Zuñiga revealed that fishermen from as far as Quezon province had been fishing in the area and had brought their catch to the fish port. At least 100 tons of fish are being shipped out of the port daily, he reported, but tons are thrown back into the sea.

Because of the price drop, fishermen just dumped their excess catch because it would be more expensive to store them with ice, he said. A block of ice costs P360.

Chin-chin de Castro, Bulan municipal administrator, sees an opportunity for manufacturers of canned fish.

"Our local fishermen have abundant catch and they need additional buyers. And the local government unit is very willing to assist any canning factory deal with the fishermen so everything will be orderly," he said.

"*Lawlaw* is a very ideal species for sardines-making because it has a high fat content," De Castro said.

He said the sheer number of dead fish along the shore was enough to make hundreds of cans of sardines.

Lacdang said the seemingly bottomless supply of *lawlaw* could be an effect of illegal fishing in the area. *Lawlaw* serves as food for big fish, such as tuna, mackerel, barracuda, grouper and swordfish, he said.

Because of illegal fishing, particularly the use of dynamite and purse seine nets, the big fish population has been nearly decimated, Lacdang said. "They (*lawlaw*) are able to breed in big numbers as there are no more big fish that prey on them," he said.

But Rafael Burton, agriculture officer of Magallanes town, said *lawlaw* abundance was normal. This is a proof that illegal fishing no longer exists in the area, he said.

The sardines species must have found a breeding ground along the Sorsogon-Masbate waters, he said.

Burton said several small entrepreneurs were now engaged in fish preservation and dried fish-making.

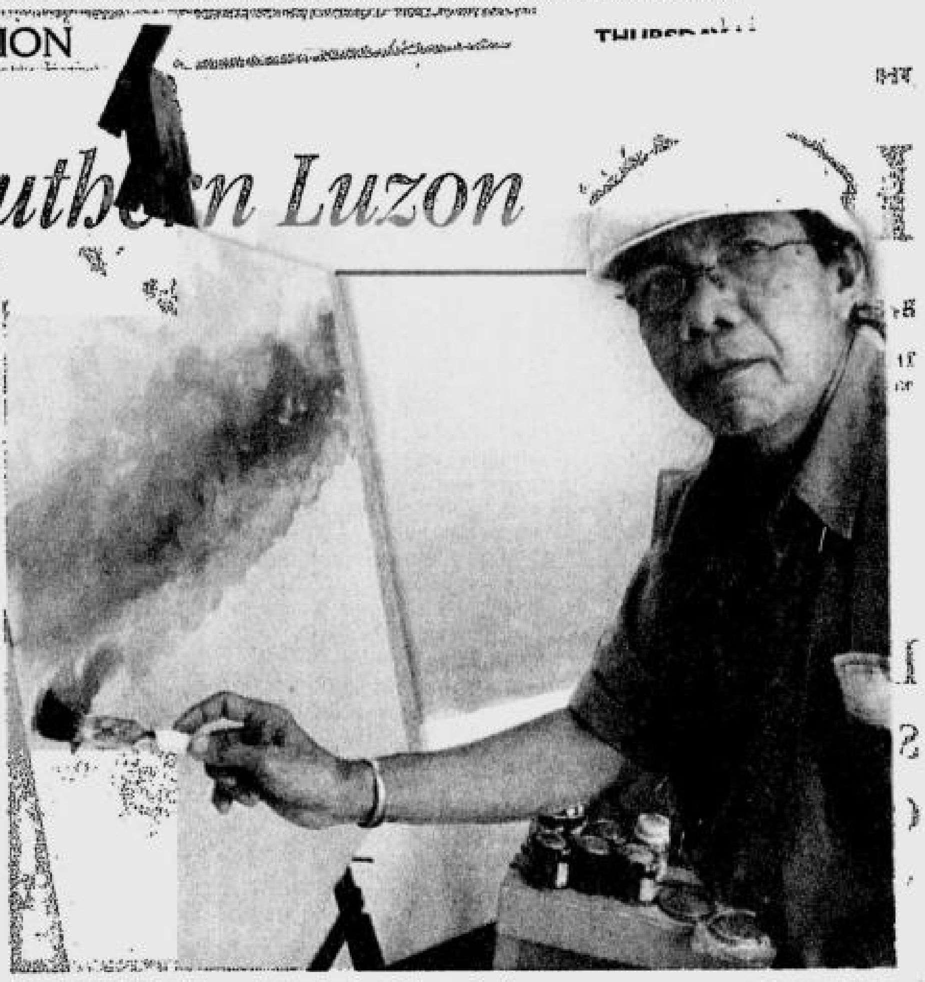
But he warned that *lawlaw* could not be preserved for long, because of its high fat content. It is also not a good ingredient for feeds production, he said.

Lacdang gave assurance that his office was willing to extend technical assistance to local fishermen in finding alternative uses for their excess catch, such as *patis* and *bagoong* making.

Carranza and De Castro appealed to the fishermen to conserve their supply, lest it be gone in the coming days.

"If we waste God's bounty, soon it would be taken away from us," the mayor cautioned.

THERE is just too much of this fish called *lawlaw* in Sorsogon that tons of them have been dumped back to the sea. BOBBY LABALAN



REY BALUYUT still has a lot to give for the love of art. NIÑO JESUS Y. ORBETA

Painter gives free art lessons to street kids

By Jed Ll. Bacason
Legazpi City

THE CHILDREN watched intently as he effortlessly glided the brush in seemingly random strokes on the canvass, splattering colors until a lake appeared, surrounded by trees.

"Let your creativity fly," veteran painter Rey Diaz "Ugat" Baluyut told them after demonstrating how to create a landscape painting.

The session on May 14 was the first of a series of free art lessons that Baluyut and his wife Irma, also a painter, volunteered to give to the poor and out-of-school youths under the care of the Sisters of Charity of Jesus and Mary (SCJM), a charitable institution in Legazpi City.

The 12 students, aged 10 to 14 and mostly raised in the streets, come from the poor fishing villages of San Roque, Victory Village and Pigcale.

Collections

"Art is not just for the rich. Poor kids who have the potentials also deserve the chance to express themselves through painting so we give these children art lessons for free," Baluyut said.

This, after a fire just four months ago burned all of his and his wife's art works accumulated for more than 20 years in their apartment-cum-gallery.

The masterpieces perished along with the artist couple's major plans and numerous collections.

Also burned were Baluyut's collection of close to 1,000 poems he had written, theatrical clothes, his collection of hats which he wore only during shows and exhibits, and a set of bamboo instruments he devised and played.

Before the tragedy, hundreds of art works and installation pieces filled the apartment. Baluyut's collections practically covered the walls, even up to the ceiling.

With his paintings priced at least P20,000 each, Baluyut lost millions of pesos worth of paintings.

But he said it was not hard for them to accept what happened. "I just thought of it as part of life."

Through frequent talks with neighbors and other people and trips to other places, Baluyut slowly relieved himself of sorrow over his lost treasures.

Inspired

The idea of giving free art lessons came up after Baluyut saw the children, being accompanied by the SCJM missionaries, curiously inspecting some of the art works of child prodigy CJ da Silva, which were on display at the Pacific Mall in Legazpi last month.

He approached the missionaries and offered to teach the children art lessons for free. As an art instructor, he normally charges P2,000 for a comprehensive 10-session course.

"I know that these children also have potentials in art. What they need is someone who will pay attention to them," he said.

The children will receive the same lessons he gives to his students, Baluyut said. "I will be teaching these children how to paint on the spot, portraits, landscapes, still life, how to mix colors and all the other basics of painting."

Minnie Vibar, an SCMJ coordinator, said Baluyut's effort to expose the children to art was an integral step in keeping them out of the streets and exploring their full potentials.

"Some of the children have hidden talents that need to be tapped by someone who has mastery of that field," Vibar said.

One of the students, 13-year-old Jimbo Rangasajo, was very attentive during the session. A parking boy in the downtown area, he earns P20-P25 daily.

As the session progressed, Baluyut noticed Jimbo's eagerness to learn. Asked if he would return for the next session, the boy let out an enthusiastic "yes, sir."

But not all the children showed dedication to the lesson. Some were busy talking with their seat-mates while some pretended to be asleep.

"It's a little difficult teaching these children, but in time they will pay attention," Baluyut said.

Start

A native of Manila and graduate of Bachelor of Fine Arts, major in advertising, Baluyut started his career in the late 1970s with RG Productions, a movie outfit. He was one of the artists tasked with promoting a certain movie.

He came to Albay in 1980 and opened an art shop in Daraga town, where he stayed for 11 years.

Baluyut concentrated on advertising, designing shirts, streamers and banners.

"The local art scene was so much different back then when I arrived at Legazpi. People were not yet fully aware of the different kinds and forms of art," he recalled.

In 1984, he devoted more time to serious painting. "With the nature of my work, I was always in the company of noted visual artists so I easily picked up my passion for painting," he said.

Through several art exhibits in Legazpi and in Manila, Baluyut became a known and respected painter in the locality, even though he was not always seen. "I became a well-known 'unknown' artist," he said.

Focusing on social realities, his works are collages and assemblages of ordinary objects arranged artistically to create surreal representations.

Through his works, he aimed to initiate a sense of unity and brotherhood among the people. Unity, he said, has been said too often but never felt. "We say we are united for a cause, but in reality we are not."

Ugat Artists

In 1991, Baluyut founded the Ugat Artists Philippines in response to the need to organize intellectuals from Legazpi and other places and work toward a common goal—promoting local arts and artists and serving as outlet for budding artists to showcase their skills.

"Ugat Artists Philippines encompasses all forms of art, not just visual and performing arts. Even activists who advocate a justifiable cause can be part of the group," he said.

The group, according to him, also aims to seek out and mold persons with potentials in the field of art.

As membership grew, the group was able to mount exhibits featuring the members' art works and hold outdoor painting sessions and theatrical shows in Legazpi and neighboring towns.

Some of the notable members are Albert Bajamundi, Lester Cuadra, George Vibar and Ronald Bajaro. Each of them has produced several independent exhibits.

Baluyut himself had been planning a major exhibit in an art gallery in Makati City for over a year when his apartment burned down.

"All the paintings to be exhibited were already prepared and packed. Unfortunately, the fire consumed all of them," he said.

"Tragedies are part of life. My story as a visual artist did not end with the incident. I'm still here," he said.

"We may have lost a lot, but we still have a lot to give. I'm not trying to be a hero. I'm doing this for the love of art," he said, a smile etched on his face.

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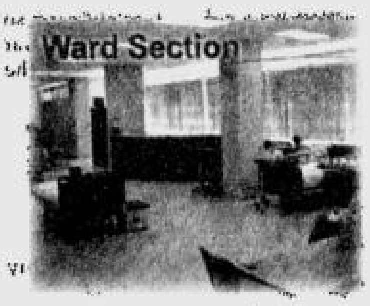
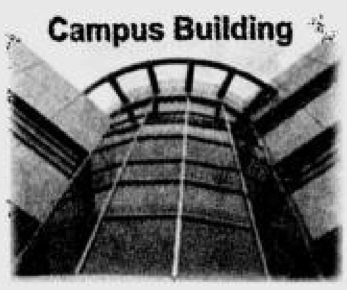
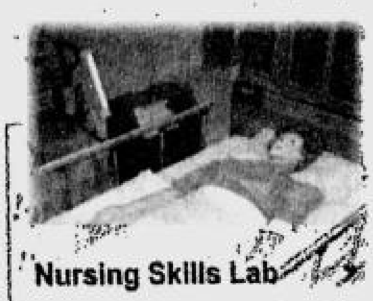
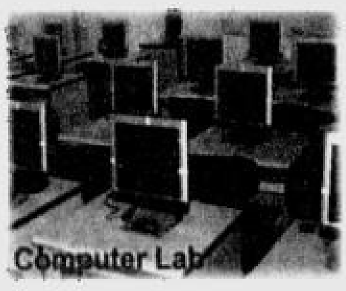




Delivery Room





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Residents raise threat of landslide

By Edson C. Tandoc Jr.

THE ONSET of the rainy season has brought fear to residents of a mountain town in Rodriguez, Rizal, portions of which are being leveled to make way for a transport terminal.

Residents told the INQUIRER that continuous rains and flash floods could inundate communities not only in Rodriguez but also in nearby San Mateo, Marikina City and Pasig City if rock-blasting activities in Barangay San Rafael continue.

Sought for comment, Rodriguez Mayor Pedro Cuerpo said apprehensions raised by the barangay residents were unfounded, adding that the project would not expose them to landslides and flash floods.

"I am an engineer. I am assuring them that (landslides and floods) would not happen," Cuerpo said in a phone interview.

The local government admitted that a transport terminal was being constructed in the area, but some residents maintained the terminal project was just a front for quarrying.

They said that because of the blasting activities, the threat of landslides was now literally dangling on top of their heads. Should rocks and layers of mud fall, debris carried to the river would create an artificial dam which could give way anytime.

This would trigger a flash flood through the narrow Marikina River, the residents added. The effects are already being felt now, according to Clarita Cruz, a resident. A brief rainfall last week resulted in flooding in the streets at knee-deep level, Reyes said. "We never experienced that before," she added.

But Cuerpo said the blasting was actually aimed at assuring the people that the mountain was safe. "They were in a dangerous situation before because some residents were reportedly engaged in quarrying at the site," he said.

Another resident, Pastor Cruz, and his neighbors had already questioned the project in the Office of the Ombudsman. The case is pending.

The blasting operations began in December 2004 at the foot of Mt. Parawagan, just 25 meters away from the residents' homes.

The construction is ongoing and blasting operations are expected to resume if necessary, Cuerpo said.

Drug tests set before enrollment

By Fran Katigbak

THE CITY of Muntinlupa has launched a campaign urging schools to submit high school and college students to drug testing prior to enrollment.

The Drug Abuse Prevention and Control Office (Dapco) asked the city's four public and 22 private schools to coordinate the tests with the local government.

Drug screening for new students is mandatory, while old students would be subjected to random drug examination, said Chito Valerio, head of the Drug Abuse Prevention and Control Office (Dapco).

The drug testing campaign was launched in accordance with a resolution from the Dangerous Drugs Board and Section 36, Article III of RA 9165 or the 2002 Dangerous Drugs Act. Valerio said the Pamantasan ng Lungsod ng Muntinlupa is the only school that has adapted the drug screening policy so far.

The city has a drug testing laboratory that could accommodate students who would be tested, he added. Individual certificates will be issued to students who get negative results a week after the drug test. The Dangerous Drugs Board, the National Bureau of Investigation, and the Philippine National Police will conduct further tests on specimens from students found positive for illegal drugs use.

EDWIN BACASMAS

PRICE CHECK
President Macapagal-Arroyo inspects notebooks and other school supplies sold in Manila's Divisoria area as she encourages the public to take advantage of the low prices offered at the bargain capital.

Fare hike certain, but amount may change

By Clarissa S. Batino

A FARE increase is expected by June, but it may not be the P2 hike proposed by transport groups.

The Land Transportation Franchising and Regulatory Board (LTFRB) said it would continue accepting payments for fare matrices from PUV drivers and operators even as the P2 fare increase supposed to take effect today was put on hold.

LTFRB chair Maria Elena Bautista said that if the board decides to revise the level of the fare increase, then the agency would issue new fare matrices for free for those who have paid their dues and have the required documentation before implementing a fare hike.

"We won't release any fare matrix for now because we are not yet sure how much the increase would be based on the pending petitions," said Bautista.

The board suspended Tuesday the P2 jeep and metro bus fare increase indefinitely following opposition from several groups.

One motion came from a commuter group asking that the fare increase be slashed to P1 instead of P2.

Another is a request of jeepney groups to increase to P2 the P1-fare hike approved for Regions 6 (Visayas), 10 (Northern Mindanao), 11 (Davao) and 12 (Socsargen and Caraga).

"The board has deferred the implementation of the jeep fare hike nationwide pending the resolution of the cases," said Bautista.

The P2-increase for non-air-condition buses in the metro was also deferred, following a petition filed by Antonio Baltazar opposing the move.

LTFRB board member Felix Racadio said that if a petition was filed within 15 days after a decision was made, the board would have to act first on the petition before allowing the implementation of a fare hike.

The board gave the parties a maximum of five days to submit their position, and another five days to reply to the position of the opposing groups.

Movies may cost more in San Juan

By Edson C. Tandoc Jr.

STARTING next week, enjoying a movie in a theater at the Greenhills Shopping Complex will cost you P1 more.

That is, if theater operators and moviegoers heed a request of the San Juan municipal government to raise the cost of cinema tickets.

Councilors Dante Santiago, Christopher Torzar, Kit Peralta and Cesar Sto. Domingo have sponsored a resolution asking theater owners to add a P1 surcharge on movie tickets from June 2005 to March 2006.

The surcharge will be donated to the San Juan chapters of the Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts of the Philippines, organizations of barangay watchmen, barangay council persons and even the association of barangay chairs.

The resolution said the surcharge shall be directly remitted to these organizations. Santiago said the surcharge would be voluntary.

The local government will be asked to put up signs in theaters explaining where the surcharge would go, according to the resolution.

From June 1 to July 31, the surcharge shall be given to the Girl Scouts of the Philippines San Juan Council.

The Boy Scouts of the Philippines San Juan Council, on the other hand, will receive collections from Aug. 1 to Sept. 30.

The two organizations usually hold activities during September and October.

Effective tool

"The scouting movement is an effective tool and system society can use in combating moral and values degradation among the youth," the resolution, added.

From Oct. 1 to Nov. 30, the collections would go to the Kapisanan ng mga Magigiting na Kagawad.

Collections during the holiday season from Dec. 1 to Jan. 31, 2006, when theater attendance is expected to peak, will be remitted to the Association of Barangay Chairs.

The Federation of Barangay Tanod Executive Officers, an organization of barangay watchmen in San Juan, will get its share from Feb. 1 to March 31.

"Government associations also need additional funding so they will be able to carry out their plans and programs," the resolution also said.

A nation that hates foreigners?

ON TARGET

Ramon Tulfo

A SLAP on our system of justice was made by two Australians charged with theft before the Caloocan City court.

The two accused foreigners escaped. They wouldn't want to be tried by our courts. They said they would not get a fair trial.

If you ask me, our criminal justice system deserved it. I'll tell you why.

The two Australians, Julian Jones and Terry Welch, were charged with theft by their subcontractor, a Filipino who's very influential.

The Australian company that employed Jones and Welch had a misunderstanding with the Filipino sub-contractor over the delivery of materials being used in reconstructing part of the Philippine National Railways (PNR) system.

The Australian firm had hired the Filipino contractor to build part of the railway system.

But the Australian firm's representatives ended up being sued by the Filipino contractor for theft. Up to now, it's not clear why.

I don't want to touch on the merits of the case because that would be sub judice. This means prejudging the case even while it is being tried in court.

What I want to bring out here is the way the Australians were treated by the court that was trying them.

Government prosecutors found the theft charge against the Australians without any basis. They asked the court to dismiss the case.

But the good judge didn't want the case dropped just like that. For reasons only she knows, she wanted the case to continue.

The Australians, through their lawyers, again asked that the case be dropped, citing the prosecutors' decision not to pursue the case anymore.

But the judge was adamant. She wanted to hear the case with or without the prosecutors.

The Australians became desperate. They couldn't turn to anybody for help. They turned to me. I asked the government prosecution service why the case was still being heard when prosecutors found no merit in pursuing the case. The Department of Justice said they didn't know why.

I wrote about the judge's unusual interest in continuing to hear the case.

Finally, in exasperation, the Australians escaped. I think they were aided by their government in going through immigration at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport.

This is really a slap on the face of our judicial system.

By now, many foreigners must have known about the shabby treatment of the Australians at the hands of our judiciary.

In the eyes of foreigners, we are a nation of xenophobes, people who hate foreigners.

***

The Bureau of Customs will not be able to meet its target revenue for this year as things go now.

Customs Commissioner Bert Lina has imposed very high tariffs on goods arriving via containers.

For 20-foot vans, the tariff is now P100,000, whereas before it was P60,000. For 40-foot vans, the tariff is P200,000, up from the previous P80,000.

The result: Many importers have stopped bringing in goods. And since there are no goods to tax, money has stopped going to the tills.

But despite the high tariffs, the "tong" collection from importers and brokers by corrupt customs personnel has not stopped.

Lina doesn't know about this, my sources say.

Fire victim bats for bill vs abusive firemen, building owners

By Tina G. Santos and Miko Morelos, trainee

A CHINESE-FILIPINO businessman, who is seeking justice for the tragic death of his two sons in a fire that hit Binondo in 2002, is seeking the amendment of fire safety laws to protect the public from alleged corrupt fire officials and unscrupulous building owners.

Eric Cochingyan said the legislators at the Senate and House of Representatives should support the proposed Senate Bill 1657 filed by Sen. Miriam Defensor Santiago punishing abusive fire officers and building owners.

Loss of lives

The failure of building owners to establish fire safety standards and to put an end to alleged corruption in the Bureau of Fire Protection (BFP) often lead to the loss of lives of innocent people trapped inside defective establishments.

The businessman added that most of these fire incidents have a big number of casualties even if the fires occur in buildings that are not even high rise structures but appear to be firetraps during post-fire investigations.

Cochingyan, who lost two sons in a fire that gutted the Li Seng Giap Building in Binondo on Dec. 24, 2002, said the tragedy would not have occurred if fire officials were mindful of their duty to inspect and order the closure of buildings that are fire hazards in the city.

No enforcers

"A building's design saves people, not the firemen. The laws are there, but no one is enforcing it," he said.

He added that the proposed bill would make the failure of owners and lessors of residential and commercial buildings to comply with the national and local fire safety laws a criminal act.

The proposed law carries a penalty of imprisonment for people found liable according to the provisions of the bill.

Criminal offense

"It is unbelievable how these building owners operate even if their buildings are not safe or are firetraps for its occupants. It contemplates a scenario where the unscrupulous building owner operates his building completely inadequate with fire safety provisions mandated by law through the use of falsified fire safety inspection certificates or any means of deceit. This act is a criminal offense and should be formalized through the passing of the Senate bill," he added.

Unsafe building

Under the Fire Code of the Philippines, a firetrap is defined as an unsafe building because it could burn easily or because it lacks adequate exits, fire escapes and water sprinklers.

Cochingyan said some fire officials allegedly conduct fire safety inspections of buildings to make it appear the fire department is doing its job in keeping the establishments safe from fire.

Lax measures?

There are reports of fire officials who allegedly issue fire safety inspection certificates to buildings who lacked the necessary fire safety features like fire exits, enclosures and sprinklers, he added.

Fire safety

A sprinkler system protects the victims from smoke and helps them reach the fire exits. This is the one of the principles of fire safety, Cochingyan said.

He cited as an example buildings that are five-stories high. He said he had heard stories that some inspectors would often declare the building as having only four floors with a mezzanine.

"According to the law, four story buildings are only required to have either an enclosed staircase or a sprinkler system. Five-story buildings are required to have a sprinkler system on the premises and to provide an enclosed staircase for tenants," he said.

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Willie faces yet another sexual molestation case

NEW CHARGES being faced by Willie Revillame are not laughing matter for the TV host-comedian.

By DJ Yap, Bayani San Diego Jr. and Laurent Thorigne, Trainee

WILL Willie Revillame's troubles ever end?

A former dancer on the noontime TV show hosted by Revillame yesterday filed sexual harassment charges against him.

The charges were filed a day before his expected reply to an earlier sexual molestation case filed by a tabloid entertainment editor.

A former member of a dance group called "The Bump," Euanne Bautista said she was encouraged to press charges against Revillame after she heard of the acts of lasciviousness case filed against him by tabloid editor Ma. Salvacion Asis.

'Wowowee dancer'

Bautista was a dancer at Revillame's show "Wowowee."

In her complaint-affidavit, the 20-year-old dancer said that in the third week of February 2005, she was about to buss Revillame when he suddenly embraced her and forced her into a dressing room at Studio 3 of ABS-CBN.

She said Revillame "blocked the door with his back and pulled my face closer to his, and started kissing me in the lips with his tongue stuck out."

Bautista said she was struggling to free herself from Revillame's embrace, when an old woman opened the door.

The host-comedian ordered her to sit on a sofa before telling the woman that they were having a "meeting," she said.

Bautista took the opportunity to get out of the room.

She added that on several occasions, Revillame insisted on kissing the cross pendant on her chest and also tried burying his nose in her cleavage.

On their way to Quezon

She also recounted that on Feb. 18, Revillame tried to touch her private parts while they were on a bus for a remote telecast in Real, Quezon.

After that trip, Bautista said the executive producer of "Wowowee" suspended her for one week.

Following the suspension, she said, her mother asked her to quit the show, prompting her to resign on April 1.

Bautista in television and TV interviews said that prior to her "resignation," Revillame confronted her about rumors of the alleged sexual harassment circulating in tabloids.

Revillame purportedly threatened her not to push through with the case.

She alleged that before she was allowed to quit, she was ordered to sign a waiver in which she refuted tabloid reports of her accusations against Revillame.

Bautista's complaint did not say who made her sign the waiver, but in media reports she identified those who made her sign the waiver as "management."

Revillame is expected to appear before the Quezon City prosecutor's office today to submit his rejoinder to Asis' reply-affidavit.

Last week, Asis presented evidence that the host-comedian apologized to her after he allegedly sexually molested her in March 2002.

The entertainment editor of Pilipino Star Ngayon and Pang Masa accused Revillame of touching her breasts and forcing her to hold his private parts. She said he kissed her forcibly on the lips, ears and cheeks.

Revillame denied all the charges in his counter-affidavit.

INQUIRER tried to get Willie Revillame's side, calling him several times but he is not picking up his cellphone.

As of presstime, Atty. Dexter Lacuanan has yet to confer with his star-client, who was busy with his hosting chores on "Wowowee" at that time.

But Lacuanan said they welcome Bautista's formal filing of charges against Revillame.

"This issue is best threshed out in the court of law," the lawyer said.

He added that if the supposed victim goes on camera and airs her grievances on TV, then it will be easy to surmise that "it is not justice that she is asking, but is merely seeking to attack, assail, and besmirch" the accused.

Voice of reason

Thus Lacuanan said, "We are thankful that [the plaintiff] finally listened to the voice of reason and is addressing these issues within the confines of the law."

In another interview, Lacuanan said it was premature to make further reactions because he had not received a copy of the complaint.

While refusing to speculate on the motive of Bautista in filing her complaint, Lacuanan said he found it peculiar that these things were being brought out only now.

"I'm not saying these are the factors why they filed the charges, but I think it's a telling factor, why are these cases being filed now? When (Willie is) preparing for his wedding and he's happy," he said.

Solon doubts safety of flood project

By Nancy C. Carvajal

THE PRESENT design of the flood control project for the Camanava area may put people's lives in danger, a congressman said yesterday.

"More than 30,000 households would sink if the DPWH (Department of Public Works and Highways) would not push for the redesign of the project," said Malabon-Navotas Rep. Ricky Sandoval.

Camanava is an acronym for Caloocan, Malabon, Navotas and Valenzuela.

Sandoval inspected the ongoing project yesterday along with Ilocos Sur Rep. Erik Singson, chair of the House committee on public works, and Camanava DPWH Director Robert Lala.

The present design would endanger lives in adjacent communities because several regulation ponds would be built in the middle of a thickly populated area, Sandoval said.

The regulation ponds are intended to contain floodwater.

Should the dikes forming the regulation ponds fail, it would be like puncturing a giant aquarium in a room full of people, the solon explained.

According to Sandoval, the walls of the ponds have no foundation and have doubtful structural integrity.

He said the design of the structures was prepared under the assumption that ground subsidence is minimal and uniform. He added that storm wave surges were not considered, and that the project lacked topographic information needed in deciding the elevation of the flood control structures.

The defects were discovered by Dr. Fernando Siringan and Dr. Kevin Rodolfo of the National Institute of Geological Sciences of the University of the Philippines, he said.

"The primacy of life warrants the review of its design and the validation of the observations of the Filipino scientists," Sandoval said.

He also feared that the project's design could be obsolete in a decade.

The representative said the defective dikes would be giving people a false sense of security.

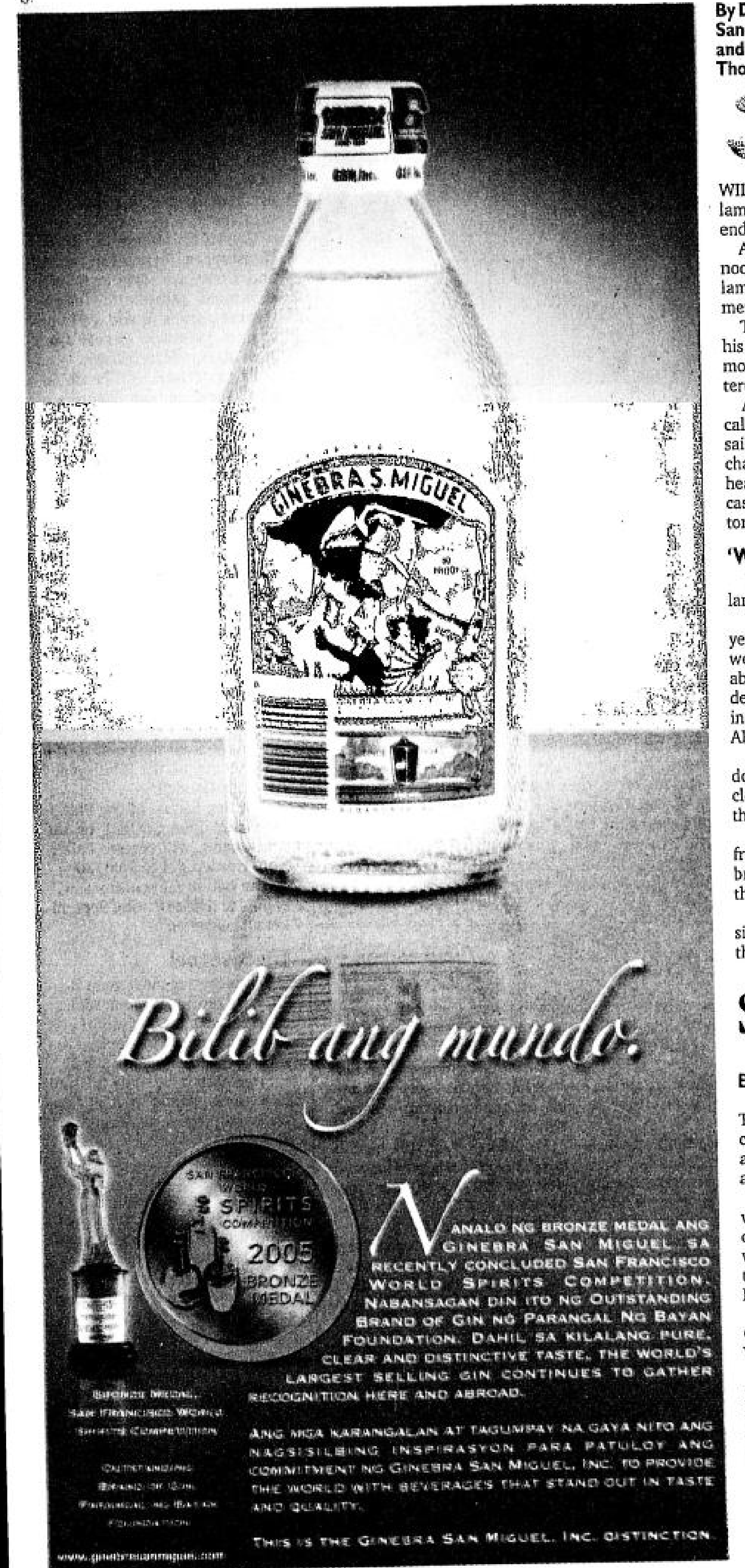
"It might encourage more people and industries to situate in harm's way," Sandoval said.

DPWH Director Lala said the congressman's concerns would be looked into.

Lala estimated that 26 percent of the project was already finished.

Sandoval said that the Japanese consultants of the project should be made accountable for any eventuality if they stick to the present design.

"These consultants are receiving a hefty amount of consultancy fee that could be done better by Filipino engineers with less," he added.



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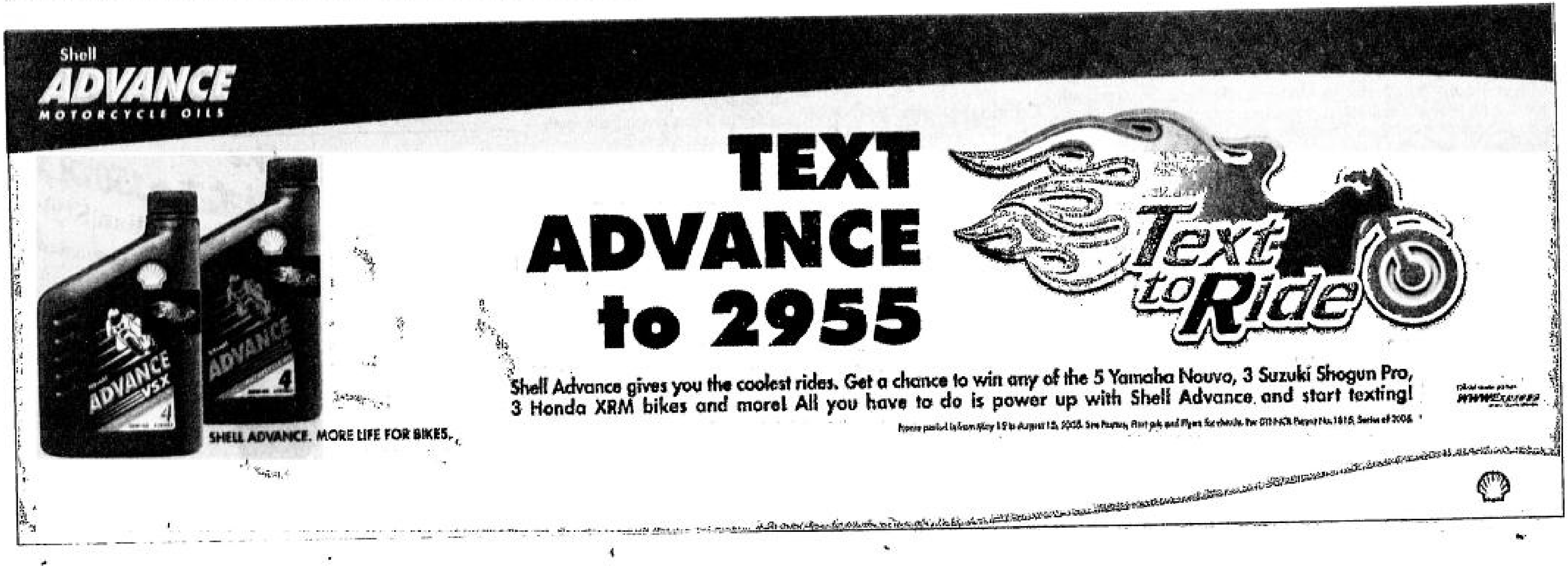

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Compiled by L. Manguiat

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Editor **Teddyvic S. Melendres**

WHAT'S INSIDE

- **Tayao, Papa enter NTC quarterfinals** /A23
- **Spurs leave Suns in the dark** /A24

Golden Tour bikathon hits road today

By Marc Anthony Reyes

PUSHED late into the summer and with far fewer stages, the Golden Tour 50@05 fires off today with just enough excitement and star power in front of the Marikina City Hall.

Last year's Tour Pilipinas champion Rhyan Tanguilig will lead the 81 riders, including four former champs, scattered in nine teams, who will answer the starting gun at 9 a.m. for the first of 10 legs ending in Lucena City.

The 125-kilometer race will take the cyclists through the rough and tough Mabitac-Tayabas route passing Tanay, Famy, Pangil, Paete and Kalayaan towns in Rizal Province, Lumban, Pagsanjan and Cavinti in Laguna before rolling downhill to Luisiana, Lucban, Tayabas and Lucena in Quezon Province.

Centennial Tour champion Warren Davadilla, 2003 Tour Pilipinas king Arnel Quirimit, Bernardo Llentada (1991 winner) and 2002 FedEx Express Calabarzon champion Santy Barnachea will be the men to watch along with Tanguilig, who made it at the last minute after organizers considered his appeal.

Tanguilig's personal appeal to join the race got a positive reply from the organizers, who took note of his shaky situation with the Pagcor continental team whose agenda didn't sit well with the Tour organizers.

Tanguilig, sources said, was having problems with his salary with the professional trade team and was reportedly dropped from the squad before it left to compete in Japan.

Another trade team cyclist, Lloyd Reynante, failed to join the Tour because his license was suspended for unsportsmanlike conduct by the Union Cycliste Internationale (UCI) and the ban will be lifted only on June 30.

Presented by Tanduay, this year's Tour is organized by Dynamic Outsource Solutions Inc. and T&G Tourism and Development Corp.

The 81 cyclists will be racing under the banner of Colt 45, Guerrero Brandy, Go21, Touch Mobile, PLDT, Department of Tourism, BIR, Customs and Metro Drug.

But all eyes will be on Tanguilig from Aritao, Nueva Vizcaya, which unfortunately is not included in this year's stop.

POC vote unanimous on BAP suspension

By Musong R. Castillo

THE BASKETBALL Association of the Philippines was suspended indefinitely by the Philippine Olympic Committee through a unanimous vote in yesterday's General Assembly.

A caretaker committee will now be created to handle the country's basketball affairs and it will be composed of representatives from the PBA, PBL, the NCAA and the UAAP.

POC president Jose "Peping" Cojuangco will likely chair the committee.

"It is unfortunate that it had to come to this," said Cojuangco, who presided over the GA at his home in Dasmarinas Village. "We gave the BAP all the opportunities to justify the actions it had taken after the meeting with all basketball stakeholders."

Thirty-seven of the 38 regular NSA members approved the motion to suspend the BAP.

Only Manny Lopez, the president of the Amateur Boxing Association of the Philippines, was absent. Sources said he was still in Palawan where the Abap staged the National Youth and Women's championships recently.

Christian Tan, the BAP VP, and Fritz Gaston, who represented the cage body, did not object to the motion, though Tan was allowed to say his piece before the suspension was handed down.

"At least Mr. Tan was man enough to face the charges brought against the BAP," said one NSA sec-gen. "Though this was way beyond the right time for him to say the BAP's piece, it was an admirable gesture on his part."

The former Tarlac Congressman said he received a 13-page letter from the BAP before the GA in which the cage body stressed it did not renege on fundamental agreements reached with the POC last April.

"Again, they were telling me that they did not go against me," Cojuangco said. "The truth of the matter is, the BAP did not go against me, but against a decision reached by them (with the basketball committee)."

Cojuangco, who called for a meeting among all the cage stakeholders on Saturday, sought the suspension of the BAP after it reneged on fundamental agreements with the basketball body created by the POC last month.

He said Sheik Saud Bin Ali Al-Tani, the Fiba-Asia president five days ago, had been informed of the action taken against the BAP.

"For too long a period, the performance of Philippine basketball in international competitions has been in the doldrums," Cojuangco wrote Al-Tani. "It is with our deepest regret to inform you that the POC has decided to seek the suspension of the BAP."

Dr. Carl Menky Ching, president of Fiba-International, had reportedly assured the POC of support since the action taken was in accordance with the constitution and by-laws of the local Olympic body.

Guerrero bets ready to shine

FROM tail-ender to contender.

That's how Renato Dolosa, Guerrero team coach, sums up the chances of his riders when the Tanduay presents...Golden Tour 50@05 is flagged off with the first lap from Marikina to Lucena today.

"The team is complete," said Dolosa in Filipino. "We have good climbers and sprinters. If they help each other, the team will go places."

Dolosa, 39, decided to call it quits after a distinguished riding career that saw him win the Tour Ng Pilipinas in 1995, the first time that the event dangled a car as part of the individual champion's prize.

Guerrero Brandy is actually the new name of the Tanduay team, which finished in the bottom half last year with Arnel Quirimit as skipper.

Veteran Enrique Domingo has been named team captain with Danny Ganigan as assistant.

Wilfredo Calosa, Jay Tolentino, Dante Cagas, Arthur Bugay and rookies Joel Duenas, Marlon Servino and national pool member Renato Sambrano make up the rest of Team Guerrero.

ANDRE Brown of Ginebra takes a shot off Anthony Miller of FedEx.

AUGUST DELA CRUZ

Ginebra halts 4-game FedEx winning skein

GAMES TODAY (Makati Coliseum)
4 p.m.—Alaska vs Purefoods
6:35 p.m.—Coca-Cola vs Shell

By June Navarro

BARANGAY Ginebra is not yet out of the woods but at least the Kings' fate remains in their hands.

The Gin Kings turned back the FedEx Express, 106-97, last night to keep their bid alive to avoid the last two slots in the next round of the 2005 Gran Matador PBA Fiesta Conference.

Andre Brown tossed in 27 points and hauled down 17 rebounds while Mark Caguioa and Rommel Adducul added 19 and 18 points each as the Gin Kings notched their eighth victory in 17 games.

"We are simply hoping to finish in fifth-eighth place and avoid the last two seats," said Ginebra coach Siot Tanquingcen, who will next face the Talk 'N Text Phone Pals tomorrow.

The last two spots in the next round will be burdened by the twice-to-win handicap before they could advance into the quarterfinals.

"We need to work more on execution and put people on the right spot," said Tanquingcen. "If we can't do that against Talk 'N Text, we'll surely have a rough time beating them."

For the Express, their chances of securing an outright semifinal seat rest on the outcome of their final assignment in the classification round against the San Miguel Beermen.

The Express, who fell to 9-8, must beat the Beermen to at least forge a playoff for the No. 2 seed and the automatic semifinal berth that goes with it.

Renren Ritualo had 25 points after going 10 of 25 from the field and Anthony Miller added 21 points and 23 rebounds for the Express, who lost their four-game win streak

In the second game, San Miguel eked out a 72-66 decision over Red Bull for its 10th win in seven games.

The Barako dropped to 9-6.

Meanwhile, players classified as half-Filipinos and seeking to join the 2005 Philippine Basketball Association (PBA) Draft have until May 31 to submit their respective applications.

The scores:

First Game

GINEBRA 106—Brown 27, Caguioa 19, Adducul 18, Salvacion 11, Santos 8, Dimaunahan 7, Echavez 6, Seigle 4, Noble 4, Ballesteros 2.

FEDEX 97—Ritualo 25, Miller 21, Ferriols 10, David 9, De Ocampo 8, Billones 8, Dacia 6, Arboleda 6, Gonzales 2, Pingris 2, Victolero 0, Codiñera 0.

Quarters: 21-30, 49-48, 78-69, 106-97

Fiba Cup: Foreign bets arriving

THE BULK of the foreign delegations is expected to arrive today in time for the 16th FIBA Asia Champions Cup set May 29-June 5 at the Araneta Coliseum.

Qatar, headed by Rasheed Al-Takrooni and Kuwait Club, led by team manager Mohammed Albarrek, arrived yesterday and will open hostilities against separate teams.

Kuwait will go up against Syria at 1 p.m. while Qatar will clash against Jordan at 3:15 p.m. before the 5:30 p.m. opening ceremony.

Qatar will be bannered by three national players—6'8 Yassen Ismail Musa, a two-time MVP of the ABC Champions Cup, 6'6 Mohammed Orabi Al-Jabri and Mohamed Seleem Abdulla.

Kuwait, on the other hand, will be spearheaded by Osamah Mubarak, Salem Aleneze and Rashid Alrahah.

The Philippines, mentored by Chot Reyes, hopes to hurdle its debut match against India at 6 p.m. while Tobol-Kazakhstan wraps up the action versus I.R. Iran at 8:15.

"The event will push through and we urge everybody to support the RP team to get into the semifinals despite being grouped with defending champion Sagesse-Lebanon and Tobol-Kazakhstan," said BAP secretary general Graham Lim.

The Philippines has great chances against India but its next two matches will be crucial. The RP Nationals must beat either Kazakhstan after India or Lebanon before wrapping up its elimination campaign against I.R. Iran to barge into the semifinals.

China, Vietnam spikers trip rivals

DEFENDING champion China thumped Thailand, 25-15, 25-15, 25-18, Tuesday night in the fifth Asian Youth Girls Volleyball Championships at the Mandaue City Sports and Cultural Complex in Mandaue City.

The mighty Chinese sized up the Thais in the early going, engaging their rivals in a tight battle before unloading eight straight points to win the opening set to the delight of close to 2,000 spectators.

Thailand, also one of the strong contenders in this under-18 event sanctioned by the Asian Volleyball Federation and organized by the Philippine Volleyball Federation, tried to bounce back in the second set—to no avail as China, behind Chunlei Zeng, proved too classy and powerful off the net.

In the other game, Vietnam outlasted India, 21-25, 25-17, 25-18, 17-25, 16-14.

MAJOR SPONSOR: Milo has signed as major sponsor and the official energy drink of the 23rd Southeast Asian Games the country will host Nov. 27-Dec. 5. From left Roberto Pagdanganan, chair of the Philippine SEA Games Organizing Committee; Eugenio Simioni, Nestle Philippines senior vice president and marketing director; and Jose Cojuangco Jr., president of the Philippine Olympic Committee and vice chair of the Philsoc.

INQBOX

Question of the Week

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Young Turks gain in All-Filipino billiards

THE YOUNG Turks of billiards made their presence felt in the Hope All-Filipino Billiard championship recently as four Bagong Sibol entries made half of the last surviving eight players seeking for the event's P1 million prize.

Ramon Tuason, chief organizer of the TM Philippine 9-Ball Champions League which allowed its players to join this rich tournament by postponing its matches last week, named Jharome Pena, Carlo Biado, Richard Aguilar and Jeffrey Da Luna as the Bagong Sibol 'Sweet 16' finalists in the Hope event.

Pena, also a leading campaigner in the TM Taco Master side event of the Champions League, plays anchor for Team Makati. Da Luna plays for Team Parañaque while Biado and Aguilar are mainstays for Team Parañaque.

Another big name who barged into the top 16 is Gaga Gabica, a familiar face in the Touch Mobile-sponsored league, who recently played in an exhibition match against the Bagong Sibol boys.

"It feels good that five cue artists associated with the Champions League bested professional players for the last eight spots and made it to the sweet 16. It's all worth it. Any more of our players advancing is a bonus," said Tuason, the man behind the defunct Metropolitan Basketball Association.

The Hope All-Filipino Billiard Championship will resume today and will be aired over Channel 13.

Jemah Sports, television partner of organizing RocketMan Enterprises, is the producer of the Hope tournament.

SPORTSWATCH

Baragatan chessfest

THE BARAGATAN Open chess tournament will be held at the Provincial Capitol Building, Puerto Princesa City, Palawan on June 4 to 7. The event, sponsored and hosted by the provincial government of Palawan headed by Gov. Joel T. Reyes and Vice Gov. Dave Ponce De Leon, is open to all chess players (titled or untitled) nationwide. A total cash prize of P140,000 will be at stake in the event organized by NCFP vice president and provincial administrator lawyer Romeo Seratubias with P50,000 going to the champion. Interested parties may contact Seratubias, also tournament director, at 0921-5589516) for details.

Nat'l Chess Team tilt

REGISTRATION is now in full swing for the 2005 National Chess Team championship which gets under way on June 13 to 19 at the St. Michael's College gym in Iligan City. Expected to sign up in the week-long competition organized by the National Chess Federation of the Philippines and sponsored by the City Government of Iligan, headed by Mayor Lawrence Ll. Cruz, Councilor Vart Belmonte and city sports director Frederick Siao, are chess teams from the private and government sectors, schools and universities and different chess associations or clubs nationwide. Interested teams may contact the NCFP secretariat (02)435-1114, Frederick Siao (0920-9620500) and Willie Abalos (0921-6219898).

Youth Active meet

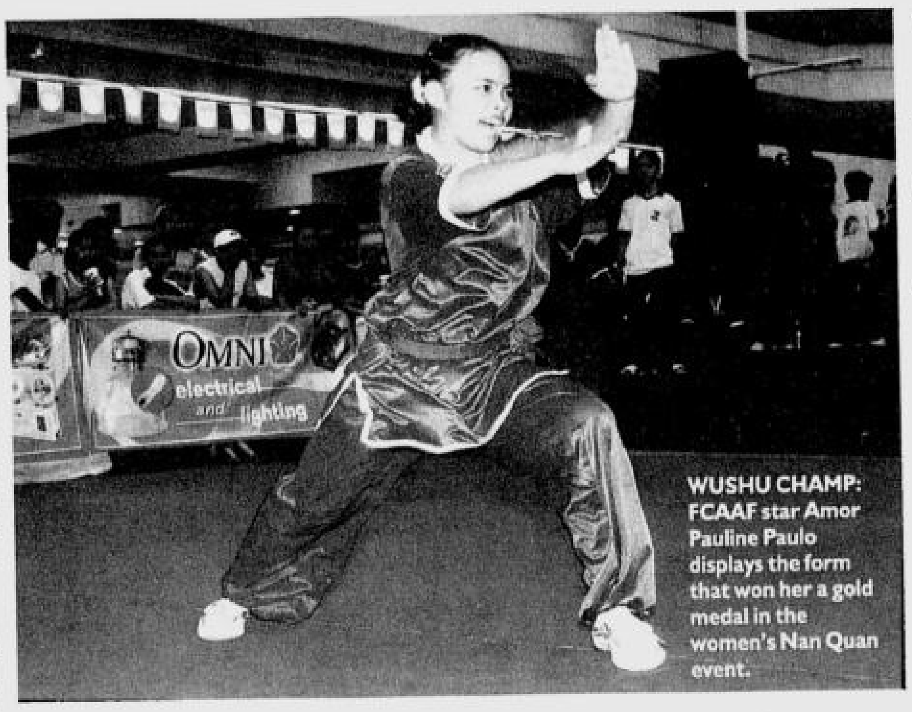
PILIPINAS Shell Petroleum Corp. has expanded this year's Shell National Youth Active Chess Championships (SNYACC) to eight legs covering eight regions starting with the National Capital Region (NCR) qualifiers on June 25-26 at SM City Manila. With the addition of three legs from last year's five-stage circuit, the event is expected to lure a record field from the country's chess playing students and out-of-school youths with two divisions—the juniors, exclusively for players 20-years-old and below and the kiddies, for players 14-years-old and below (born not later than 1991)—on tap in the four-month long tournament launched by Pilipinas Shell in 1992.

FCAAF teams prevail

NATIONAL Wushu Training Center and FCAAF (Filipino Chinese Amateur Athletic Association) teams ruled the men's and women's competition, respectively, in the recent 10-week SM summer sports wushu tournament. Led by Anthony Ting and Henson See, the NWTC squad whipped Ling Nam Athletic Federation and UP Wushu Club, while FCAAF, paced by national athlete Amor Pauline Paulo, toppled the NWTC and Ling Nam. Organized by Wushu Federation of the Philippines in cooperation with IMG (International Management Group), the tourney was held at 10 SM malls. Omni's owner David Yang was delighted with the outcome. National coach Lester Pimentel was the event's project director.

Daytime 4-cock derby

THE CROWD-DRAWING "Daytime 4– Cock Derby," conceptualized by promoters Kags Paliza and Aba Badiola, will be staged today at Sta. Ana Cockpit featuring the elimination round. With more than 100 fights lined up, the event starts at noon, said pit manager Gerald Go. All qualifiers will face one another on Saturday, May 28 for the title. The guaranteed prize is P700,000 for an entry fee of P5,500. "A bonus of P10,000 will be given immediately to participants who will score two points in the elimination round," said Badiola. Interested parties may call 898 -3474 and 898 -3475 or 0921-5191962 (Aba) and 0918 -9251121 (Kags).



WUSHU CHAMP: FCAAF star Amor Pauline Paulo displays the form that won her a gold medal in the women's Nan Quan event.

RP wheelchair dribblers bound for Nagoya meet

AS part of their preparations for the 3rd Asean Para Games in December, the country's top wheelchair cagers will compete against tough Asian rivals in the Wheelchairs and Friendship Center of Asia-Wheelchair Basketball Friendship Games starting this Sunday (May 29) at the Nagoya Sports Complex in Japan.

The RP squad, a selection of the best players from the Philippine Wheelchair Basketball League, will leave for Nagoya on Friday. PWBL Most Valuable Players Juanito Mingarine and Rene Macabenguil lead the 15-man RP team competing in the six-nation double round-robin event.

The Philippines has been bracketed with host Japan and powerhouse China in League A. League B is composed of Korea, Thailand and Malaysia.

The Philippines finished second behind Thailand in the 2003 Asean Wheelchair Basketball League in Singapore.

The squad's participation in the tournament is part of Team Philippines' preparations for the 3rd Asean Para Games to be held in the country on Dec. 14 to 21. The trip is supported by the Philippine Sports Commission, adidas Philippines and Friends of Philspada.

Magnolia, Harbour eye semis

GAMES TODAY (JCSGO Gym)
2 p.m.—Granny Goose vs Harbour Centre
4 p.m.—Magnolia vs Toyota Otis

MAGNOLIA Ice Cream started to get it together just in time.

Midway in the eliminations, the Wizards didn't look like the defending champions. But the late addition of Fil-Am Kelly Williams sparked Magnolia's resurgence in the PBL Unity Cup.

"His presence gave us so many options," said coach Koy Banal as his Wizards gun for a semifinal berth against Toyota Otis-Letran at 4 p.m. today at the JCSGO Gym in Cubao.

Harbour Centre will also shoot for a Final Four slot when it battles a well-rested Granny Goose at 2 p.m.

Toting twice-to-beat advantages, Magnolia and Harbour Centre only need to win once to join early semifinalists Montaña Pawnshop and Welcoat Paints.

Although the Wizards' timely turnaround has been credited to Williams, Banal stressed the contribution of the entire team.

"Everyone is working so hard," said Banal, who's seeking to extend the Wizards' winning run to five. "We're showing better teamwork and there's unity. The team is playing better at this stage."

Coach Tonichi Yturri is also hoping for a similar improvement in Harbour Centre's quarterfinal match.

"We have to raise the level of our game several notches higher if we want to play in the semis," noted Yturri. "We should play real smart offensively and defensively."

The Portmasters had a chance to gain outright entry into the semifinals, but lost to Welcoat in overtime, 92-87, in their Tuesday playoff.

But they're favored to win this time and Mac Cardona, the leading Most Valuable Player candidate, is again expected to fuel the Portmasters' offense.

The rookie squad swept its two meetings against Granny Goose.

Jasmine W. Payo

2 foreign AF3 drivers sign up with new teams

TWO foreign drivers, including Irishman John O'Hara, last year's first runner-up, have signed up with new teams in a bid to boost their sagging fortunes in the 2005 Asian Formula Three series that will visit China anew next month.

O'Hara, a far third in the overall drivers' championship in the Open class after an unspectacular performance in the third and fourth legs of the series in Zhuhai earlier this month, left the Fujitsu Ten Toyota Team Tom's squad and rejoined Shell Helix Kinetic PCSO, his team last year when he drove to second place overall behind Christian Jones of Australia.

Rodolfo Avila of Macau, a rookie in the series competing in the Open class, also left Fujitsu Ten Toyota Team Tom's and joined the Christian Jones Motorsport team in his bid to perform better in the fifth and sixth legs of the series on June 18-19 in Zhuhai.

Both O'Hara and Avila were overwhelmed by the field in the third and fourth legs in Zhuhai on May 7-8.

O'Hara managed a fourth-place finish in the third leg but laid a big fat egg in the fourth while Avila, after failing to finish in the third leg, came in sixth in the fourth leg.

"I had to do something," said O'Hara. "The results have not been good this year and I felt it was a combination of problems with the car, engine and me. I was overdriving due to the car and engine problems. I am confident that I can be back on top in a car I know."

O'Hara, who has 32 points in the standings behind Jones (62) and series leader Ananda Mikola of Indonesia (75), will again drive the Honda-powered car that he used last year with Shell Kinetic, the team being managed by Pepon Marave.

Marave drove the car to the overall championship two years ago. Driving the same car, he finished fifth in both the third and fourth legs in Zhuhai.

MARLON Stockringer (center) beams with pride after winning the Rotax Max F125 category of the Shell Super Karting Series third league at the BRC. With him are second placer Marcel Thenu and third placer Matteo Guidicelli.

Stockringer wins anew

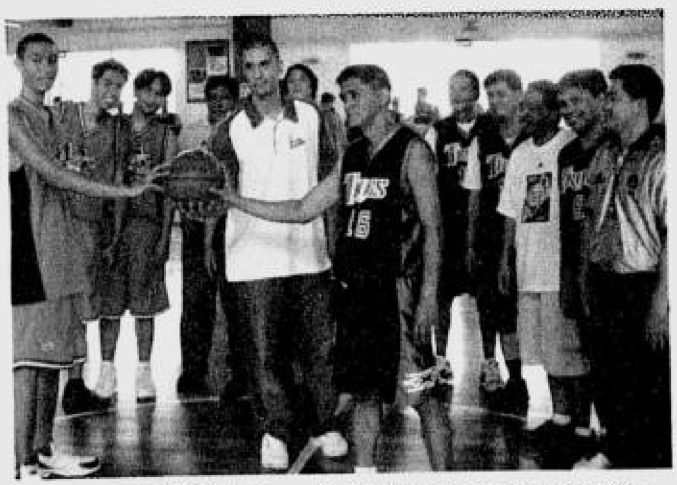
MARLON Stockinger thwarted more experienced rivals to rule the Rotax Max Seniors class recently in the third leg of the 2005 Shell Helix Superkarting Series at the Batangas Racing Circuit.

It was the third straight victory for the 14-year-old Stockinger, driving for Swiss Finance and Investment Corp., Birel, Intrepid, Puma, Lima Hotel, Le Souffle, Kart Care, Bridgestone and Salon Prive.

Stockringer warded off rivals Marcel Thenu, Ivan Carapiet of the Cebu Racing Group and defending champion Matteo Guidicelli to rule the 27-karter field. Thenu landed second and 2004 Karter of the Year Guidicelii third.

"BRC is a challenging track in a sense that you can't pull a big lead because the corners are wide and fast and everyone is driving with the same horsepower," said Stockringer. " I made a little mistake and five karts went by me in an instant. Fortunately, I was able to climb back up to first place and salvage pole position."

Tom, Marlon's father and teammate, took second place in the F125 Rotax Max Master's Category. The next race is set on Aug. 6 and 7 at the Enchanted Kingdom. Stockinger finished the 12-lap race in 20:00.467.



BURLINGTON CUP: Rich Alvarez (middle) was the special guest at the opening of the 2005 Burlington Friendship Cup last Sunday at the Phil Buddhacare Academy Gym in QC. With him are Michael Parala (left) of LA Gear and Mon Magbitang of LLQC and league officials and representatives.

Gracious Gerald

SPECTATOR

Al S. Mendoza

THE RUNNER-UP last year in the 88th DHL Philippine Open was a Filipino, Juvic Pagunsan. That was at The Riviera Golf Club's Langer in Silang, Cavite. Juvic, an amateur then as he is now, placed second behind Edward Michaels, an American.

This year, another Filipino placed second in the 89th Philippine Open. Gerald Rosales made a run at it but Adam Le Vesconte, an Australian, had other things in mind. Le Vesconte stopped Rosales with a stirring final-round, 7-under-par 64.

A Filipino was also a runner-up in the Open of 1997. Marciano Pucay finished second behind American Kevin Wentworth, the lefty who topped the Mobiline Philippine Open at the old Camp John Hay in Baguio City. A local boy, Pucay failed to exploit his familiarity of Camp John Hay, the course where he learned how to play golf.

As in the previous Opens, there was also trauma and drama in the 89th Open.

Pagunsan and Rosales had offered handsome hopes for a Filipino to win as they became strong contenders going to the last day of the 89th Open. But Pagunsan knocked himself out of it when his tee shot found the water guarding the par-3 8th for a 5. He would console himself by salvaging low amateur honors for the second straight year. And to think that only about two months ago, he grabbed headlines by declaring he'd turn professional. Was Juvic merely manipulated by unscrupulous persons when he said he was going to turn pro when, in reality, he wouldn't? Whatever, it would now seem his change of heart was for his own good.

Rosales, the Open champion in 2000 at The Riviera Golf Club, was just one down like Pagunsan behind Le Vesconte going to the final round. He had the brightest prospects of overtaking the 34-year-old Australian, firing four birdies and one-putting seven holes for a 67.

Alas, Rosales' fiery finish was just not enough.

Le Vesconte played so solid that not even Tiger Woods would have been able to defeat him. Le Vesconte's 64 was marred by just one bogey—on the first hole. Le Vesconte was so focused the first-hole bogey served merely as trigger to a round that was as lovely as the stunning view of Mount Malarayat, venue of the 89th Open. His nines of 33 and 31 were the stuff that do not only make one a champion, they were also the stuff that make one an instant celebrity.

"This win will change my life forever," said Le Vesconte, who beat Rosales by four strokes with his rounds of 71-70-67-64, 12 under. "I've won small tournaments before but this one is special. This would mean a lot to me. This is my biggest paycheck ever since I joined the Asian Tour three years ago."

Le Vesconte, who won $31,500 from the total pot of $200,000, lives in Queensland, at a place called Sunshine Coast. His wife, Toni, works as a motivator, a job similar to being a psychologist.

Jennifer Rosales, the two-time LPGA champion in the USA, went to Mount Malarayat direct from the airport upon her arrival from Seoul to provide moral support to her brother, Gerald.

"Gerald played pretty well but Le Vesconte was so solid he just couldn't be beaten today," said Jennifer. "My brother did everything, but Le Vesconte was not to be denied. This is his day."

"Le Vesconte deserves to win," said Gerald, who shot 8 under for the tournament with his rounds of 69-73-67-67. "This is indeed his tournament."

***

FASTBREAK. Here's to Abe Avena, a dear buddy of Lipa City's Tony Pernez and Ricky Camacho, who beat Louie Garcia, 3 & 1, yesterday to advance to the next round of the National Club Champions tournament at Eagle Ridge. Abe, the gallant champion from Mount Malarayat, will battle Oliver Gan tomorrow. Good luck! ...Manong Cesar and Manang Vimin Mendoza, my first cousins whom I haven't seen for years, played gracious hosts yesterday and today to Kuya Pepito, Ting and Jonas of Toronto, and other relatives of mine at their sanctuary by the sea in Bauang, La Union. As always, their Cesmin Beach Resort & Cottages is a beachcomber's delight. Cheers!

'Baste' meets Ateneo

SAN SEBASTIAN College, brimming with confidence with three straight victories, takes on a resurgent Ateneo side today as it eyes the solo lead in the 2005 Shakey's V-League first conference at the Rizal Memorial Coliseum.

With new recruits Cherry Rose Macatangay and Cecil Chavaz dishing out big games, the Lady Stags walloped the undermanned Lyceum Lady Pirates, 25-16, 28-26, 25-20, Tuesday to join the La Salle Lady Archers atop the leaderboard with 3-0 slates in this tournament sponsored by Shakey's Pizza.

Macatangay, picked up by the Recoletos-based school after last year's second conference semifinalist Letran opted not to field in a team, spewed fire up front with 28 hits, including 22 on kills, while Chavaz came through with 33 sets to propel the team to victory.

And the spiker-setter tandem of Macatangay and Chavaz hope to make beautiful music again as San Sebastian tackles Ateneo, currently at No. 3 with a 2-1 card, at 3 p.m.

Highlights of today's matches will be aired tomorrow on IBC-13 starting at 7 p.m.

FARRALES: A win from finals

TAYAO: Close shave

It's Barrera, not Pacquiao, for Peden in September

MANNY Pacquiao won't be fighting International Boxing Federation junior lightweight champion Robbie Peden in September after all.

A boxing website yesterday said the Australian champ is close to inking a lucrative deal for a unification battle with World Boxing Council champion Marco Antonio Barrera "on Sept. 17."

Boxingtalk reported that the Barrera-Peden match will be in the undercard of the return appearance of ring icon Oscar De la Hoya, who had earlier announced he would fight in September, possibly against undisputed welter king Zab Judah.

Earlier, Pacquiao's trainer Freddie Roach announced that his ward is facing Peden next in September as a prelude to a much-awaited return bout with Erik Morales.

Reportedly, Golden Boy Promotions, which is owned by De la Hoya and the sole promoter of Barrera, has already tendered an offer for Peden to unify his IBF title with Barrera's WBC diadem.

In the event the fight with Peden falls through, Pacquiao's handlers will most likely look at the direction of WBA super featherweight champ Vicente Mosquera or WBO king Jorge Barrios. *Salven L. Lagumbay, Contibutor*

Bauya yields to Thai champion

PHILIPPINE bantam champ Joel Bauya failed in his bid to wrest the Pan-Asian Boxing Association bantam title after he was outpointed by reigning champ and WBA top contender Poonsawat Kratingdaenggym in their 12-round bout last Wednesday at the Rachadamnern Stadium in Bangkok.

Poonsawat, who is aiming to challenge WBA champ Wladimir Sidorenko late this year, proved too classy for the Mindanao-born Bauya en route to a 120-107, 120-106, 120-106 unanimous decision win. *Salven Lagumbay*

Tayao, Papa enter NTC quarterfinals

By Jong Arcano

GEN. TRIAS, Cavite—Kevin Tayao of Sta. Elena nipped Royal Northwoods bet Rodel Mangulabnan with a scrambling par on the 19th hole in the day's most thrilling match to join the streaking top seed John Papa in the quarterfinals of the inaugural National Tournament of Champions at the Eagle Ridge Golf and Country Club.

The 25-year-old Tayao, publisher of UNO Magazine and seeded 12th, two-putted from the fringe on his return to the first hole of the Aoki course as Mangulabnan, ranked fifth, missed a six-foot putt for par after missing the green.

Tayao next faces the host club's Oh Kwang Taek who eked out a 2 up win over Camp Aguinaldo's Rudy Amata in tomorrow's quarterfinals of the event co-presented by Hong Kong and Shanghai Banking Corp. and INQUIRER Golf in coordination with the Golf Distributors Association of the Philippines.

Papa, the eliminations topnotcher, shrugged off a resurgent Mike Ozaeta of Wack Wack, 3&1, to earn his place in the next round against Marty Ilagan of Manila Southwoods, a 5&4 winner over Joey Lerma of Eastridge.

Vinice Godio of Alabang lived up to her top seeding by booting out Sta. Elena's Lorna Tabuena, 5&3, to barge into the ladies semifinals of the tourney also supported by Omega watches and Toyota Innova, the event's official vehicle.

The other backers are Philippine Airlines as the official carrier, Printown, GG&A Club Shares, Mizuno, Titleist as the official ball, Aviva Insurance, Nike Golf, Ayala Greenfield Estates, Coppertone Sport and Sunbolt Sports Drink.

No. 5 Leana Farrales earned a shot at Godio by taking out Sam Cebrero of Orchard, 4&3. Riviera's Kat Gonzales and Kathleen Uy of Cebu Country Club set up a semifinal clash when they beat May Neri of Manila Golf (3&2) and Len Yaptangco of Tagaytay Midlands (4&3), respectively.

In the day's most lopsided contest, Alabang bet and No. 2 ranked Iggy Clavecilla finished off Adrian Mauricio of Valley after only 12 holes for an 8&6 decision. Iggy is up against Raymund Sangil, a 2&1 victor over Joey Quimson, in the featured match of the Round-of-8.

Meeting in the fourth quarterfinal pairing are Abe Avena of Mt. Malarayat and Oliver Gan of Tagaytay Highlands. Avena eliminated Orchard's Louie Garcia (3&1) while Gan won over Luis Oh of Sherwood Hills (2 up).

The survivors take a rest today and will return tomorrow to play the third course of the 72-hole Eagle Ridge complex, the Greg Norman layout. The ladies final and the men's semis will be played at the vaunted Dye course Saturday and the men's final at the Faldo course on Sunday.

Meanwhile, it was Arlette Dizon and not Tess Staub who figured in a three-way tie for the eighth slot of ladies play with Tabuena and Nila Patricio as reported on Tuesday.

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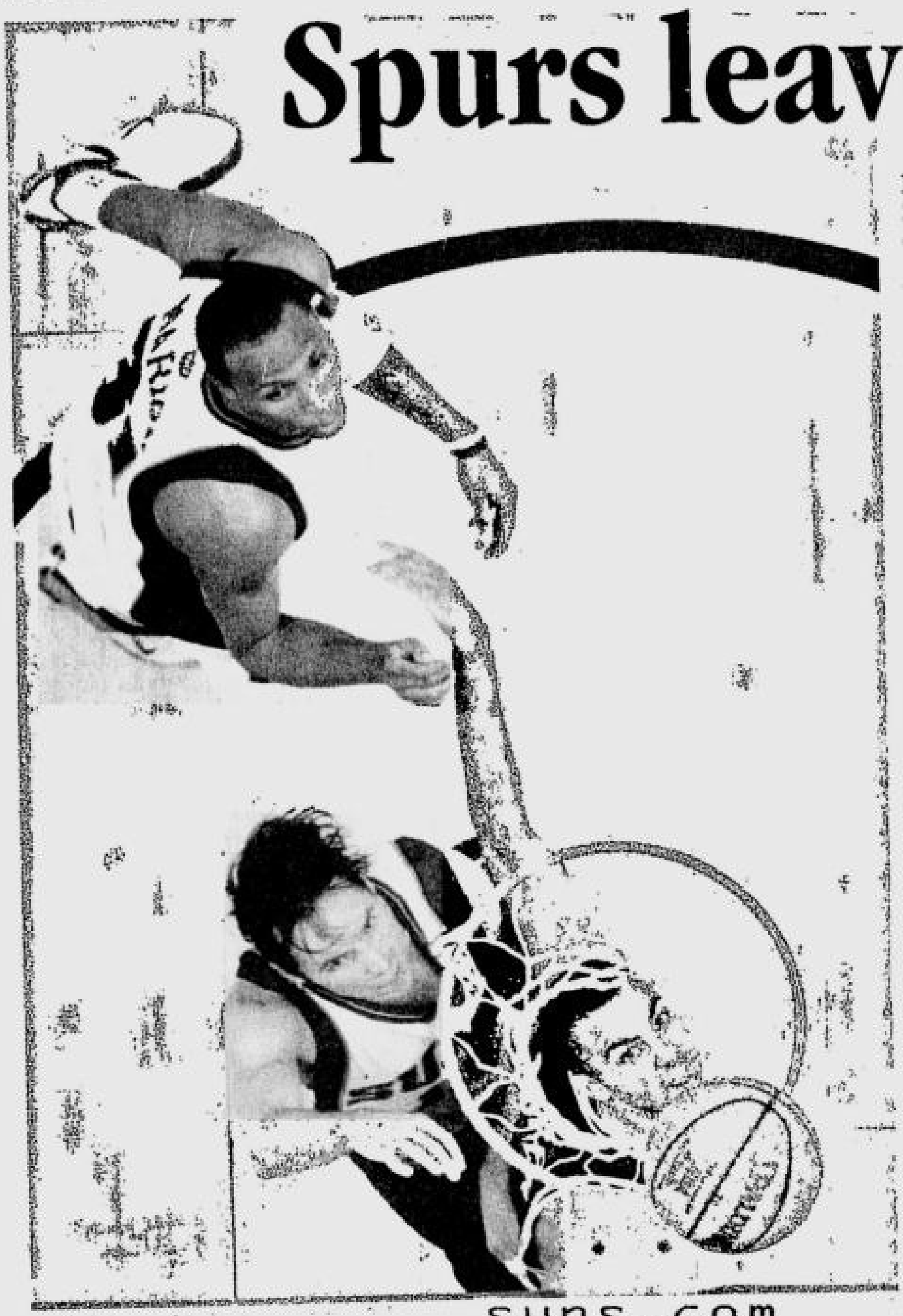
Spurs leave Suns in the dark



TONY Parker (bottom) of the San Antonio Spurs lays the ball up past Steve Nash (center) and Shawn Marion of the Phoenix Suns in Game two of the Western Conference Finals. AFP

PHOENIX—Tim Duncan scored 25 of his 30 points in the second half, and Manu Ginobili and Robert Horry made key baskets in the last 2:33 Tuesday to give the San Antonio Spurs a 111-108 victory over the Phoenix Suns.

The Western Conference finals now head to San Antonio, where the Phoenix Suns—this season's best road team—will have to deal with a 2-0 series deficit against the NBA's toughest team at home.

Steve Nash and the Suns took it to the buzzer, though, getting a chance to force overtime when Ginobili missed one of two freethrows with 4.2 seconds left. Nash took the inbounds pass and raced up the court, getting a step past Tony Parker but being picked up by defensive ace Bruce Bowen just before shooting a 3-pointer on the run.

It was on line but short, hitting the front rim to seal Phoenix's first consecutive losses since April 8-9. Suns coach Mike D'Antoni grimaced and Nash walked off blank-faced and spent from playing 46 minutes, comforted in the arms of teammate Jake Voskuhl.

"I just tried to stay in front of him," Parker said.

The Suns are in an unenviable position: No NBA team has lost Games 1 and 2 of a best-of-seven series at home this deep into the playoffs and still advanced. Four teams have rallied from 0-2 in the conference finals or NBA Finals, but all were headed home for Games 3 and 4.

The Spurs are thrilled to be going home, too, as they're 43-4 in San Antonio. The only solace for the Suns is that they won the most road games in the NBA this season and they might have third-leading scorer Joe Johnson back for the next game, on Saturday night.

"You never know, especially with these guys," Ginobili said. "The way they shoot, they don't care where they play."

Ginobili scored 26 points and Parker had 24 and five assists. Nazr Mohammed had 11, and Horry scored 10, with three 3-pointers.

Amare Stoudemire had 37 points and eight rebounds for Phoenix, and Nash had 29 points and 15 assists. He became the first player in playoff history to have four straight 25-10 games, breaking a tie with Oscar Robertson and Michael Jordan.

Although Quentin Richardson had 18 points and three 3-pointers, matching his total for the last four games, and Shawn Marion got a little bit back on track by scoring 11 points, the Suns were driven by Nash and Stoudemire. They powered runs of 13-0, 11-0 and 10-0, each taking Phoenix from behind to ahead, helping them carry a 5-point lead into the fourth quarter. *AP*

Bucks tab No. 1 lottery pick; Hill rejoins Magic

SECAUCUS, New Jersey—After a season of injuries, the Milwaukee Bucks finally had something go right as they won the National Basketball Association lottery on Tuesday night and earned the right to pick first in the draft next month.

The Bucks had only a 6.3 percent chance of winning the lottery, but a couple of lucky charms provided by fans and carried by general manager Larry Harris helped Milwaukee jump over five teams to win its first lottery since 1994, the year they took Glenn Robinson.

Atlanta, which won a league-low 13 games and had the best chance of securing the No. 1 pick, will instead have the second choice in the June 28 draft.

Portland made the other big move in the lottery, jumping from No. 5 to third.

The big losers were New Orleans, Charlotte and Utah, which all dropped two spots in the order. The Hornets had the second best chance to win the lottery but they slipped to No. 4. The Bobcats, who also had the rights to Cleveland pick in the lottery, went from No. 3 to No. 5. Utah, which had the fourth worst record, fell to No. 6.

The lottery didn't change picks seventh through 14 with Toronto, New York, Golden State, the Los Angeles Lakers, Orlando, the Los Angeles Clippers, Charlotte and Minnesota keeping those spots.

In Orlando, Florida, Brian Hill, the only coach to take Orlando to the NBA Finals, will return to the Magic as their head coach for the 2005-06 season. *AP, AFP*

FRENCH OPEN

Agassi makes painful exit; Roddick gains

PARIS—Hobbling in pain and blinking back tears, Andre Agassi left the French Open on Tuesday, his 35-year-old body unable to drive him through this most gruelling of grand slam tournaments.

While his spirit had been willing throughout, his body let him down when a nerve in his back became inflamed and he limped out of the first round, 7-5, 4-6, 6-7, 6-1, 6-0, to Finn Jarkko Nieminen.

"You know, it's bad," Agassi said. "It's something that needs to be addressed because I can't be out there like that. I mean, I literally hurt."

Agassi's wife Steffi Graf called it quits after 16 trips to the French capital.

Agassi has now had 17 cracks at the title he won in 1999 and although he refuses to talk of retirement just yet, there must be a question mark over his willingness to return for more punishment in 2006 after two consecutive first round defeats in the French capital.

Agassi's 1999 victory made him only the fifth man to win all four grand slam titles at least once and cemented his reputation as a giant of the modern game.

But on Tuesday, the sixth seed looked a forlorn and anguished figure with his Finnish opponent outrunning and outgunning him.

"Something tells me I'm at a stage of my career where I'm going to be living with these (cortisone) injections because this is unplayable when it feels like this," Agassi said.

"There's nothing you can do to get comfortable. To be out there against some of the best athletes in the world, it's impossible. I mean, to feel this, it's impossible."

Men's second seed Andy Roddick was impressive, moving into the second round with a 6-3, 6-2, 6-4 win over French wildcard Jo-Wilfried Tsonga.

But another former champion, three-time winner Gustavo Kuerten, fell, 6-3, 6-0, 4-6, 6-1, to Spain's David Sanchez. *Reuters*

Milo tennis goes south

MINDANAO age-groupers take centerstage when the Surigao Tennis Club hosts the 6th leg of the 2005 Milo Junior Tennis Cup and Regional Workshop on May 29-31.

Featured events in the Milo netfest organized by the Children's Tennis Workshop and supported by adidas with Philta sanction are the boys' and girls' 18-under, 16-under, 14-under, 12-under and the unisex 10-under divisions.

The event is being coordinated with ITF Level I coach Mario Craiz and Surigao Tennis club president Cesar Concepcion.

MEMBERS of the Team Ultraposite, champion of the Nike Summer League, display their medals and prizes together with their coach, Elmer Latonio, league commissioner Alvin Patrimonio and Nike Philippines Marketing Manager Deeda Pama (right) during the awarding ceremonies at the Pearl Manila Hotel.

NBA backboards

PROLINE Sports Center, one of the country's leading sports equipment and apparel retailer, is bringing the full National Basketball Association (NBA) experience to Filipino hoopsters.

Proline has recently bagged the exclusive Philippine distributorship of Spalding/Huffy Sports backboards, the only NBA-endorsed backboards in the world, according to Proline's Joven Babaan.

The deal allows Proline to sell Spalding-Huffy Sports backboards alongside its best-selling Spalding basketballs, giving Filipino basketball aficionados a chance to play authentic NBA equipment in their own backyard, Babaan said.

Proline will initially make available three basic models of Spalding Huffy-Backboards—official size (for size 7 basketballs in composite and acrylic versions), junior size (for size 5 basketballs), and kiddie size (for size 3 basketballs).

"We will introduce more variants before the year ends that will suit the demands and tastes of the Filipino basketball player," Babaan said.

Babaan is confident that the Filipinos will embrace the Spalding/Huffy-NBA backboards the same way they patronized Spalding-NBA basketballs at Proline, which according to Spalding Director for Sales Robert Zucker, has made the Philippines one of its top five largest markets in the world.

Ultraposite rules Nike summer league

TEAM Ultraposite buried Team Nike Impax with an avalanche of treys in the second half to pull off a runaway 92-76 victory and capture the 1st Nike Summer League crown at the Emilio Aguinaldo College Sports Center recently.

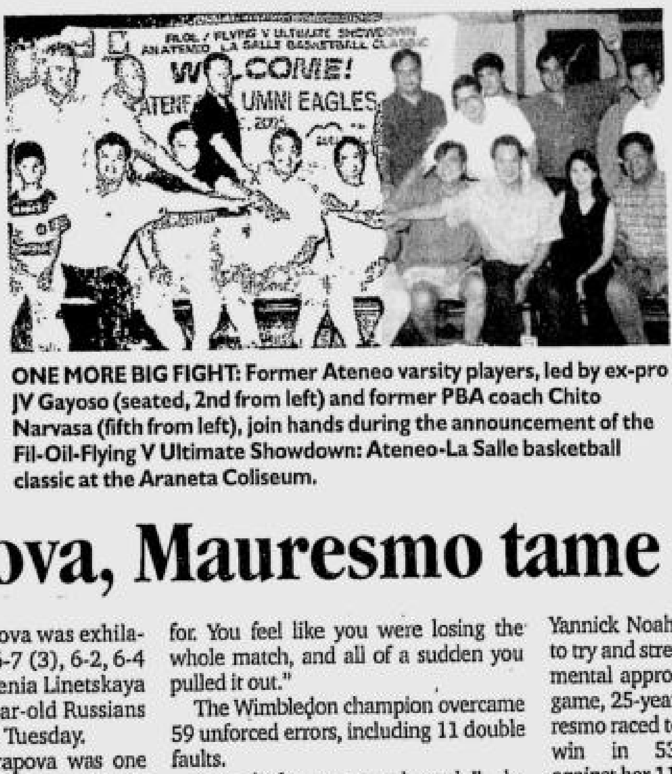
The boys of Coach Elmer Latonio and team manager LA Tenorio led, 51-40, at the half, but broke away for good in the third period on four straight triples that helped hike the lead to 75-49.

Team Nike Impax of Coach Roland Tumapat and manager Dennis Miranda was never much of a threat from there.

Team Flight's Bjorn Casibang was named most valuable player after leading the league in scoring (28.7) and rebounding (16.8).

Casibang was named to the mythical five together with Ultraposite's Edjohn Cabarrubia (forward), Team Two's Gian Chiu (center) and John Murphy Raymundo (guard) and Impax's Arjay Dionero (guard), who was also named Most Improved Player.

Casibang will also lead the four-man team Nike Philippines is sending to the All-Asia Basketball Camp in China. Also in the team are Chiu, Raymundo and Aljon Latonio of Team Zoom Generation.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ATENEO ALUMNI EAGLES

ONE MORE BIG FIGHT: Former Ateneo varsity players, led by ex-pro JV Gayoso (seated, 2nd from left) and former PBA coach Chito Narvasa (fifth from left), join hands during the announcement of the Fil-Oil-Flying V Ultimate Showdown: Ateneo-La Salle basketball classic at the Araneta Coliseum.

Walton arrival slated

ORLANDO rookie hotshot Dwight Howard and Los Angeles Lakers forward Luke Walton, son of NBA Hall-of-Famer Bill Walton, will be coming to Manila on June 2-5 for the NBA Madness 2005 at the Araneta Coliseum.

Joining them for the event are the Houston Rockets Power dancers.

Walton was the 32nd pick in the second round and third overall by then Coach Phil Jackson of Los Angeles.

Walton, who is darling of the crowd at Staples Center, is a product endorser of LA Gear men's line same with the LA Girls for the ladies' wear.

The 25-year-old Laker appears together with his NBA legend father in print ads for the brand in leading publications, particularly in sports magazines.

The father and son tandem are featured in a "Today and Tomorrow" advertising theme with "Timeless" as headline for the Catapult line of the LA Gear shoe collection.

Sharapova, Mauresmo tame rivals

MAURESMO: Trying not to analyze too much

PARIS—Maria Sharapova was exhilarated after stealing a 6-7 (3), 6-2, 6-4 opening win over Evgenia Linetskaya in a matchup of 18-year-old Russians at the French Open on Tuesday.

Second-seeded Sharapova was one point from trailing 4-1 in the third set before she rallied against Linetskaya, who was playing in just her third Grand Slam event.

"When you're down a break in the third, you're begging for mercy," Sharapova said.

"These are the sorts of matches I play for. You feel like you were losing the whole match, and all of a sudden you pulled it out."

The Wimbledon champion overcame 59 unforced errors, including 11 double faults.

"Just lucky to get through," she added. "As the third set went on, I thought the conditions were a little lighter and the ball flew faster."

Third-seed Amelie Mauresmo served notice of her intentions to go all the way at the French Open this year with a confident opening round win over Australia's Evie Dominikovic.

Watched by former men's winner Yannick Noah, drafted in to try and strengthen her mental approach to the game, 25-year-old Mauresmo raced to a 6-2, 6-1 win in 53 minutes against her 111th-ranked opponent.

"I'm trying not to analyze things too much," said Mauresmo.

Mauresmo, who became the first ever French world No. 1 briefly last year, has been touted as a potential winner here since she burst on to the scene at the Australian Open in 1999. *AP, AFP*

SHARAPOVA: Lucky to get through AP

The irresistible Darth Vader

By Ophellia San Juan
Contributor

HE IS evil. He is dangerous. He is mainly a machine.

He does not have a face for even a mother to love.

But his charisma is such that audiences get magnetized. In some instances the heroic Luke Skywalker pales beside him.

All over the world, Darth Vader merchandising items are as hot as Voltes V stuff decades ago. Local actors who participated in activities for staunch Star Wars fanatics in the Philippines endlessly posed for souvenir photos with eager kids and parents—in the metallic black Darth Vader costume that looks as hot as hell!

It would be easy to say that his power is riveting. Or even that the Dark Side strikes a responsive chord in many a human's heart, unlike The Force, which seems difficult to attain.

The truth is, Darth Vader may be the ultimate hero: an angel, then fallen angel, and finally a redeemed soul.

Everyman

He is Everyman in that sense. Born to original sin, put through the grinder of earthly existence, facing an uncertain otherworldly future, a man gravitates to hope. Darth Vader holds that out to him in his metallic fingers: the hope of a glorious eternity with The Force.

Curiously, of all the larger-than-life personae of "Star Wars," Darth Vader is the one who most closely approximates a human's dream existence. He was a precocious, victorious kid; he was disadvantaged by poverty as many

THE IRRESISTIBLE/ A2-26

Famas: shape up or break up

The country's oldest award-giving body prepares to reinvent itself

By Bayani San Diego Jr.

WHEN it comes to years logged in and scandals spawned, no other local award-giving body can beat Famas (or the Filipino Academy of Movie Arts and Sciences).

Established in 1952, Famas counted acting luminaries Jaime de la Rosa and Rosa Rosal among the members of its founding committee.

"It was Jaime who gave us the name for the award," Rosal told Inquirer Entertainment. "He suggested Fame. But I told him that it shouldn't be in English."

Thus, Famas was born.

Purification

Through the years, the Famas has been rocked with all sorts of controversies—the "biggest" of which, current president Art Padua acknowledged, was Aleck Bovick's Best Actress victory in 2003.

"There were rumors of vote-buying, campaigning, and payola," he admitted.

To clean up the organization's tarnished image, Famas members initiated a "purification process," said Padua. "We have expelled and suspended some members, and accepted the resignation of others."

Padua, the academy's vice president in the 1960s under the late president Romy Arceo, was already retired and based in the United States when he received urgent messages.

"Five former presidents asked me to come home because, they said, Famas was having problems. It was because of the Aleck Bovick issue. The group was on the verge of breaking up. When I arrived, I started the cleansing process."

To replace those who left, Famas accepted 10 new members, Padua said. "Among the recruits were former Palanca board members and winners, including 2003 Hall of Famer Reynaldo Duque. We also got the movie editors of Liwayway, Bannawag, Bisaya, and Hiligaynon magazines, along with a desk editor of Balita."

Critics might claim that the lack of stars in the 2004 Famas was a direct result of the Bovick brouhaha. Padua, however, asserted that the presidential elections also drained last year's Famas of star power. "The stars were either campaigning for Fernando Poe Jr. or President Arroyo. Even our Hall of Fame inductee Eddie Garcia (for Best Actor) didn't show up because he was in Sorsogon with FPJ."

The same fiasco could have occurred this year because ABS-CBN and GMA 7 staged their Cebu promo blitzes on the same weekend as the Famas Awards' original schedule, April 30. It was to have been aired by RPN-9.

"Not only our presenters and performers, but also our nominees were in Cebu," gasped Ace Cruz of Parsley &Thyme productions Inc.

The show was moved to June 26, and ABS-CBN came on board as new carrier station. The latter development could be yet another source of controversy because all the Best Actress nominees, for example, are the network's talents.

More rumors

"ABS-CBN has nothing to do with the selection process," Padua countered. "It will only air the show. Only Famas' 32 members can vote in the final round on the same day as the awards rites."

Unfortunately, the postponement fueled rumors of the body's eventual demise.

"That's not true," Padua protested. "Maybe the talk was started by disgruntled former members."

Cruz said the postponement was actually "a blessing in disguise because it allowed more time for preparations."

There are a number of unique concepts in store for the show—for instance, a tribute to industry clans (the Sottos, Revillas, and Eigenmanns), as well as special citations for "unsung heroes."

Cruz identified these heroes: "The assistant director, production manager, and schedule master—in a movie set, they're the first to arrive and the last to leave."

Show proper

Another important facet of the presentation will be "a balanced lineup of guests and performers" from the two major networks' roster of talents, said Tessie Celestino-Howard, Airtime marketing president.

"The host will be Lorna Tolentino, who's a GMA-7 star," Howard pointed out.

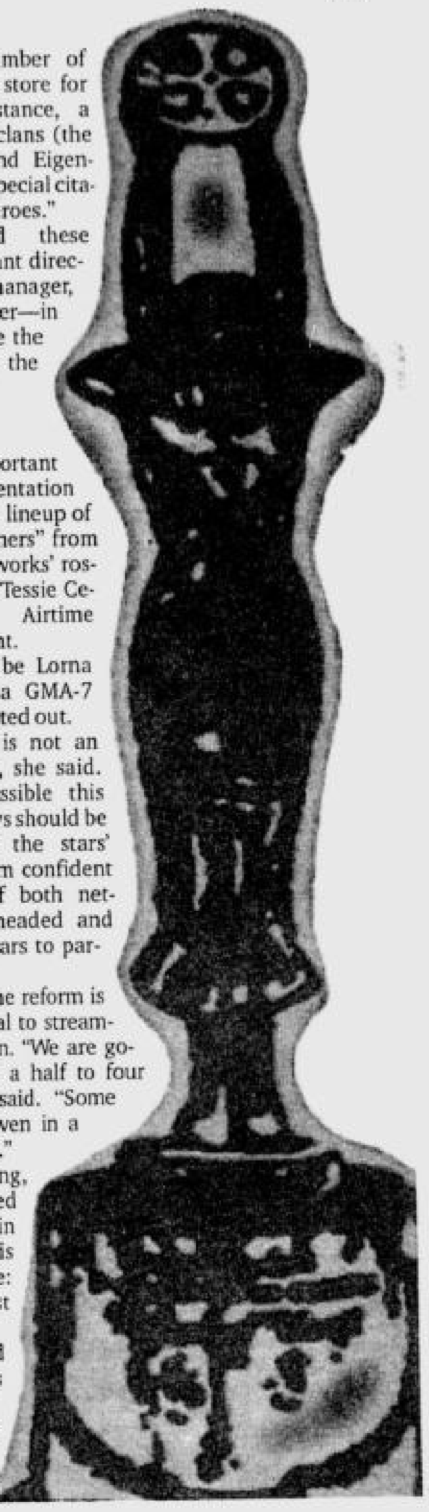
Industry unity is not an impossible dream, she said. "It might be possible this time. Awards shows should be a celebration of the stars' achievements. I am confident the executives of both networks are level-headed and will allow their stars to participate."

Another welcome reform is the organizers' goal to streamline the production. "We are going for three and a half to four hours," Howard said. "Some awards will be given in a pre-show segment."

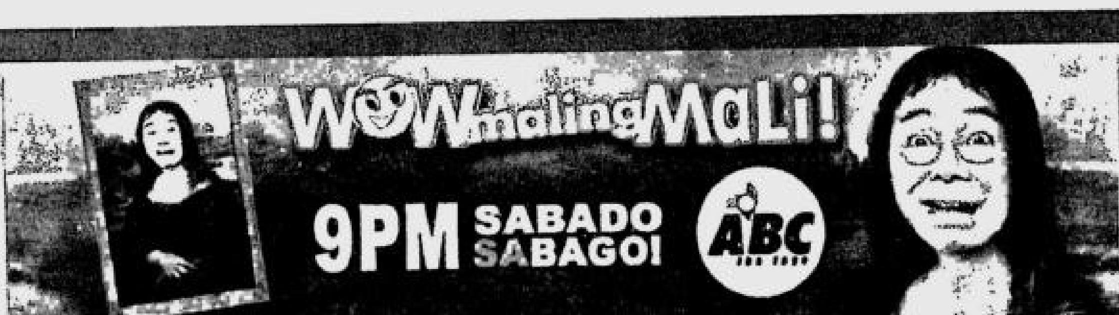
That's still long, but they insisted that this was in keeping with this year's theme: "Famas . . . Fast Forward".

A brief and brisk Famas Awards show?

Now, that's the ultimate reinvention.



PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
TV GUIDE
Thursday, May 26, 2005


WOWmalingMaLi!
9PM SABADO SABAGO!
ABC

ClickTheCity.com

Channel	2:30PM	3:00PM	3:30PM	4:00PM	4:30PM	5:00PM	5:30PM	6:00PM	6:30PM	7:00PM	7:30PM	8:00PM	8:30PM	9:00PM	9:30PM	10:00PM	10:30PM	11:00PM	11:30PM
ABS-CBN 2	Kapamilya Cinema				Showbiz No. 1 (4:25PM)	Yu-Gi-Oh (5:10PM)	Meteor Garden Full Edition		TV Patrol World		Mga Anghel Na Walang Langit	Hiram	Ikaw Ang Lahat Sa Akin	Memories Of Bali	Stained Glass	Maalaala Mo Kaya			Insider
ABC 5			Problema Nyo, Sagot Ko	EZ Shop	PBA				Sentro	PBA					Big News	American Idol		Inq TV	
GMA 7	Saang Sulok Ng Langit	Now and Forever	Glass Shoes	One Piece	Flame Of Recca	Full House		24 Oras		Darna		Encantadia	All About Eve	Extra Challenge		Magpakailanman			Saksi
RPN 9		Metro TV Shopping	Defenders Of The Earth	Hey Arnold	As Told By Ginger	Wild Thornberries	Sponge Bob	The Insider	NBA On RPN					Band Of Brothers		Newswatch Now	Video Hit Parade	Kasangga Mo Ang Langit	Police Hour
IBC 13		Lifestyle		EZ Shop		Home Shopping Network	IBC Express Balita	Pangarap Kong Jackpot		Home Shopping Network		Asian X-Tour			TM 9 Ball		IBC News Tonite		
JackTV	Just For Laughs	Just For Laughs	Ride With Funk Master Flex	Jack In The Box				Cinematch	Family Guy	Mad TV		Rescue 911	Crank Yankers	South Park	The Daily Show With Jon Stewart	Hip-Hop Nation	Ride With Funk Master Flex	WWE Velocity	
Nickelodeon	Blues Clues	Combo Nick				Are You Afraid of the Dark?	100 Deeds of Eddie McDowd	The Amanda Show	The Adventures Jimmy Neutron	Fairly Odd Parents	SpongeBob SquarePants	As Told By Ginger	Yakkity Yak	Chalkzone	Rocket Power	Hey Arnold	The Wild Thornberrys	The Angry Beavers	Rugrats
MYX		Urban MYX	MYX Backtrax	Pop MYX	OPM MYX	Take 5	My MYX	MYX Daily Top Ten		Mellow MYX	Rock MYX	Pop MYX	Urban MYX	MYX Presents		My MYX	MYX Backtrax	OPM MYX	Mellow MYX
ETC		Significant Others	Knock First	Blind Date	Fifth Wheel	Elimidate	Change of Heart	Seinfeld	Ambush Makeover	Good Morning Miami	Committed	American Dreams		Queer Eye For The Straight Girl		Entertainment Tonight	The Insider	The Tonight Show With Jay Leno	
Cinema One		Ano Ba Talaga Kuya				Babae				Vampire Hunters				Volta				Wasing	
Studio 23				PBL Game 2				Batman Beyond	Project Arms	Wazzup Wazzup	America's Next Top Model			The Bachelorette		News Central	Oprah		Yes Dear
AXN		Fear Factor (Season V)		CSI NY (Season I)		Gensomaden Saiyuki	Gensomaden Saiyuki	Pensacola (Season III)		Boomtown		30 Seconds To Fame	Mondo Magic	Lost		The Contender			
Star World		The Bold & The Beautiful		American Idol	Growing Up Gotti	Buffy The Vampire Slayer		The Simpsons	The Drew Carey Show	Star News Asia	Friends	American Idol	Growing Up Gotti	The Simple Life	Arrested Development	The Apprentice		Friends	American Idol
CNN				Business International		Larry King Live		World News	World Sport	Business International		World News Asia		World News	CNN Business Traveller	World News Asia		World News	World Sport
National Geographic		Frontlines Of Construction		Explorations Powered By Duracell		Evolution		Egypt Detectives	Africa From The Ground Up	Wow		About Asia		National Geographic Specials		Frontlines Of Construction		Explorations Powered By Duracell	
Solar Sports				Boxing: Calderon vs. Tunacao					FED Cup 1st rnd '05 USA vs. Belgium				Sports Desk	NBA Eastern Conf Finals Game 1					NBA Action
Lifestyle Network	Secret Gardens	The Fix!	Mission Organization	Carol Duvall	Molto Mario	Hot Off The Grill	Good Eats	Extreme Cuisine	Unwrapped	Tyler's Ultimate	E! News Weekend		Good Finds	Life & Style		Area		Road & Track	Back To Basics
HBO				The Challenge (2003)			Suspect				Solo			The Italian Job				A Return To Salem's Lot (10:55PM)	
Star Movies		Children Of The Corn II (2:55PM)			Pit Fighter (4:25PM)			It's A Very Merry Muppet Christmas Movie (5:55PM)			Just Married (7:25PM)			Dying Young				Spanish Apartment (10:50PM)	
Cartoon Network	Scooby-Doo Show	The All New Popeye Show		Tom & Jerry Show	The Woody Woodpecker Show	Ed, Edd N Eddy	Codename: Kids Next Door	X-Men Evolution	Static Shock	Gundam Wing	Shaman King	The Looney Tunes Show		The Powerpuff Girls	Dexter's Laboratory	Time Squad	Thundercats	He-Man & The Masters Of The Universe	Gundam Seed
Disney Channel	Mr Bean: The Animated Series	Totally Spies	The Sleepover Club	Art Attack/[illegible] Bunny	Buzz Lightyear Of Star Command	Martin Mystery	Totally Spies	Kim Possible	Mr Bean: The Animated Series	House Of Mouse	Wonderful World Of Disney			My Wife And Kids	That's So Raven	America's Funniest Home Video	According To Jim	Wonderful World Of Disney	
Cinemax	The Bone Snatcher			The Brides Of Dracula (4.15PM)			Deconstructing Sarah (5.45PM)				Snakehead Terror			Tales From The Crypt Presents Bordello Of Blood			Landslide (10:25PM)		
Hallmark Channel	Who's The Boss	Strong Medicine		HCA: The Fairytaler	Sesame Street		Mad About You	Who's The Boss	Bewitched	Five Days To Midnight			Strong Medicine	Gracie's Choice			Sue Thomas F.B.Eye (10:35PM)		Five Days To Midnight (11.25PM)
Discovery Channel		Hour Asia		Hour China		Wild Discovery		Ultimate Discovery		Extreme Machines			Superstructures	Wild Science		Ultimate Discovery		Power Zone	
Sports Plus						French Open '05 Day4 2nd Rd.													

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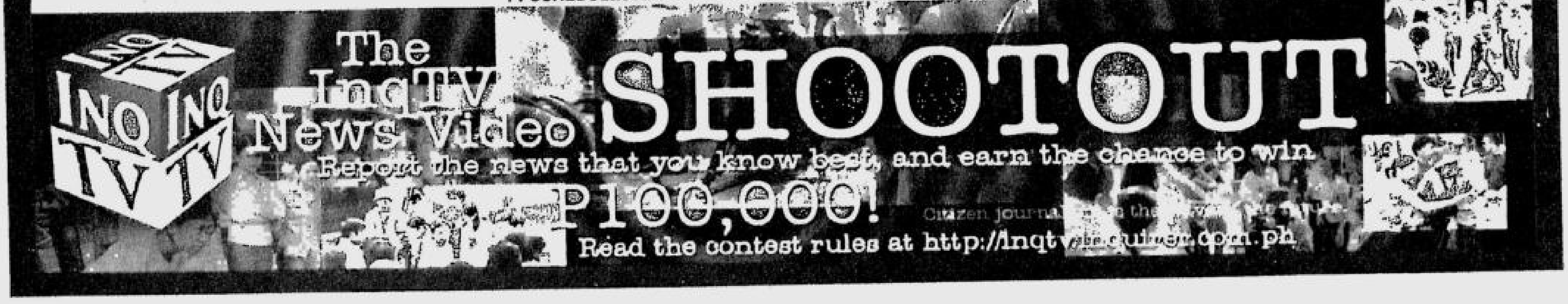
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From page A2-25

are; he was skilled as a Jedi warrior, everyone's dream role; and he wins a beautiful, intelligent queen!

George Lucas wove a story around Anakin that was not given even to Han Solo.

One begins to root for the young Anakin before he gets a Jedi training, continues to do so as he stands before the Jedi Council uncertain of his acceptance, and does not let up as one dire event after another befalls the boy in whom The Force radiates so strongly.

Losing his mother's life to sadists is a tragedy. One therefore forgives him his slaughter of the sadists, but becomes uncertain as he trades his allegiance to the Jedi for the life of his pregnant young wife.

Anakin's dalliance with the Dark Side of The Force recalls Faust and those of Faust's ilk. He is too heroic to be given up, yet is too sinful to be redeemed easily.

What better choice than for a part of himself, his own son Luke Skywalker, to come to his rescue—unwittingly at first, then fiercely determined later on?

Fear, triumph

This saga of father-and-son conflict and eventual reconciliation is not as sanguine as Jupiter's and the older gods, the Titans. A Titan, told that a son would depose him as a king, ate his sons. Jupiter, one of the sons, escapes this fate and throws the Titan to his doom.

Luke does no such thing, but Darth Vader throws the evil Emperor to his death before the latter could kill Luke, sustaining fatal injuries in the process.

We see ourselves in him—and are pleased that he returns in his Jedi prime (Hayden Christiansen taking his place beside Alec Guinness and Yoda) as a Force Ghost in the revised edition of "The Return of the Jedi."

Yes, we fear Darth and the Dark, and we can triumph if we can face him with a little amusement and natural bravado.

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1	STAR WARS III: REVENGE OF THE SITH	12:35, 3:35, 6:35, 9:35	GP
2	STAR WARS III: REVENGE OF THE SITH	11:05, 2:05, 5:05 8:05, 11:05	GP
3	STAR WARS III: REVENGE OF THE SITH	10:20, 1:20, 4:20, 7:20, 10:20	GP
4	HOUSE OF WAX	12:30, 3:05, 5:40, 8:15, 10:50	R-13

Araneta Center Leisure Guide

Cineplex Grand Lobby

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BIKINI OPEN
1:25 / 4:00 / 6:35 / 9:10
KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
12:40 / 3:40 / 6:40 / 9:40
HOUSE OF WAX
1:50 / 4:20 / 6:50 / 9:20
AMITYVILLE HORROR
2:00 / 4:20 / 6:40 / 9:00

STAR WARS - EPISODE III
11:50 / 1:00 / 1:10 / 2:50 / 4:00
4:10 / 5:50 / 7:00 / 7:10
8:50 / 10:00 / 10:10
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STAR WARS - EPISODE III
12:30 / 3:30 / 6:30 / 9:30

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❶ **STAR WARS - EPISODE III**
11:55 / 2:50 / 5:45 / 8:40
❷ **LA VISA LOCA**
11:20 / 1:35 / 3:50 / 6:05/ 8:20
❸ **UNLEASHED**
❹ **HOUSE OF WAX**
12:40 / 3:10 / 5:40 / 8:10
❺ **AMITYVILLE HORROR**
1:00 / 3:20 / 5:40 / 8:00

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'ARANETA COLISEUM EVENTS

ASHANTI LIVE IN MANILA
May 26, Thursday, 8pm

TM ASTIG: THE PBA GREATEST GAME *May 28*
5pm Induction 6pm TM Legends vs. TM Hataw

2005 PBA FIESTA CONFERENCE *May 27*
4:45pm San Miguel vs. Fedex / 7:35pm Talk N Text vs. Ginebra

16th FIBA ASIA CHAMPIONS CUP *May 29*
5:00pm Opening / 6:00pm Philipones vs. India / 8:15pm UAE vs Jordan

CENTER EVENTS

ALI MALL	***So Shoe Me: The Mother Of All Shoe Festivals*** *featuring a mallwide shoe fair, Imelda Shoe Exhibit and RP's first giant "shoe-on-wheels" ongoing until June 15.*
FARMERS PLAZA	***Back-To-School Fair*** *with big, big discounts on everything you'll need for the new school year ongoing until June 15 at the Lower Ground Floor Activity Area.*
GATEWAY MALL	***Cool Jazz Cool Classics*** *featuring performances by* ***Buhay with Tots Tolentino, Shanice Michaels*** *and* ***Brass Munkeys*** *on May 27, 28 and 29 at the Gateway Pavilion.*

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2 (DOLBY) KINGDOM OF HEAVEN *PG13*
3 (DOLBY) HOUSE OF WAX *R13*
4 (DOLBY) STAR WARS III *GP*

PREMIERE
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1 STARWARS: EPISODE-3
2 UNLEASHED
3 LA VISA LOCA
4 HOUSE OF WAX

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3 RESERVED
4 RESERVED
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1 LA VISA LOCA
2 STARWARS: EPISODE-3
3 UNLEASHED

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(Mandaluyong) tel 724.4986

1 RESERVED
2 RESERVED
3 LA VISA LOCA
4 (DOLBY DIGITAL EX) UNLEASHED
5 STARWARS: EPISODE-3

METROPOLIS star
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(Alabang) tel 850.4285

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2 LA VISA LOCA
3 RESERVED
4 RESERVED
5 (DOLBY) STARWARS: EPISODE-3
6 HOUSE OF WAX

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1 (DOLBY) RING OF NIBELUNGS
2 RESERVED

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1 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
2 (SDDS) STARWARS: EPISODE-3
3 (DTS) STARWARS: EPISODE-3
4 GOLD (DTS) STARWARS: EPISODE-3
5 GOLD (DOLBY) HOUSE OF WAX
6 GOLD (SDDS) STARWARS: EPISODE-3
7 GOLD (DOLBY) UNLEASHED
8 LA VISA LOCA
9 BIKINI OPEN
10 AMITYVILL HORROR

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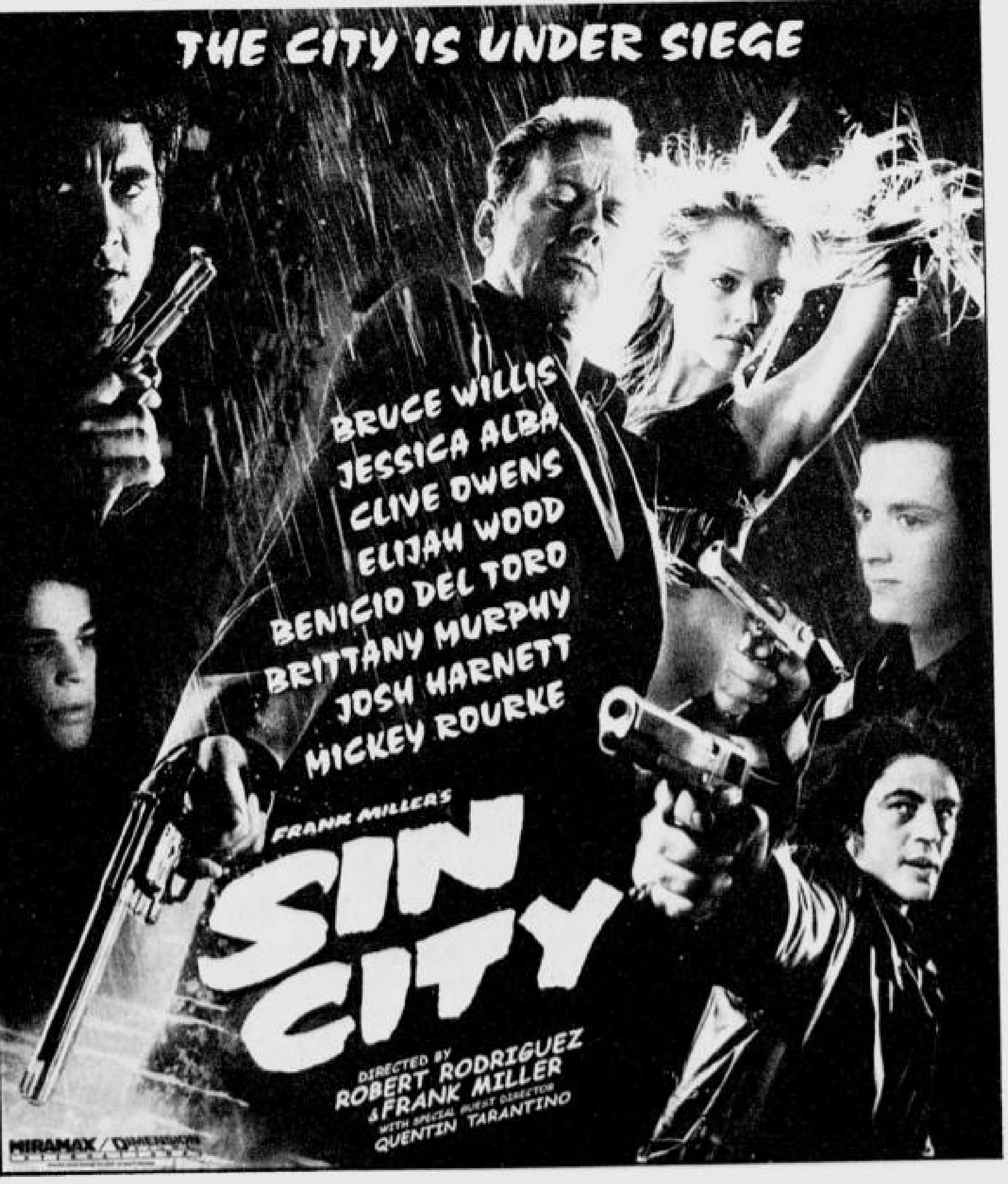

DOLOR and Villanueva

DE CASTRO

SHOW TIME

Ateneo, La Salle concert

ATENEAN Ramon "RJ" Jacinto hurled the challenge and several La Salle bands responded. LSGH '69 classmates Bobby de Castro, Mon Dolor and Ed Villacorta, with Bobby's wife and daughter, Chiqui da Roza and Danielle, and Danny Crisologo Sr. and Jr., will match Ateneans The Livewires, Titus Santiago, Nory Jacinto, Levy Hizon's Daughters, Wopsy Zamora and Jody de Asis number for number. The Elderly Brothers of La Salle will also join in the musical fray, tonight at 8, at the Captain's Bar of Mandarin Oriental, Makati City. Blue-blooded but green-joking Gary Lising will emcee the no-cover, no-entrance fee concert.

No translation

From page A30

fans. But make no mistake: these fans were not around just to scream and clap; they asked questions—in Mandarin!

An officer of the Manila fan club asked the boys about their Pinoy followers being, uh, more mature than their Chinese counterparts.

"We're not surprised," Tony said. "In Taiwan, we have lots of admirers who are kids. But we also attract their mothers ... and grandmoms, who treat us like their grandkids!"

The boys are also thoroughly professional. Jason made the Manila trip although his father was scheduled for surgery.

"In fact, I'm going straight to the hospital when I arrive in Taiwan on Sunday night," Jason said.

Another answer that made the girls swoon concerned the boys' love life.

Yes, they are all available ... and looking!

"We are all searching for girlfriends," Zak said. "But our schedule is so hectic ... Maybe we can find them here?"

Sam chimed in: "We find Filipinas warm and welcoming."

That made the entire room convulse.

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STAR WARS: EPISODE III GP 12:30,3:30,6:30,9:30	HOUSE OF WAX R13 1:35,3:55,6:15,8:35	STAR WARS: EPISODE III GP 1:30,4:30,7:30,10:30

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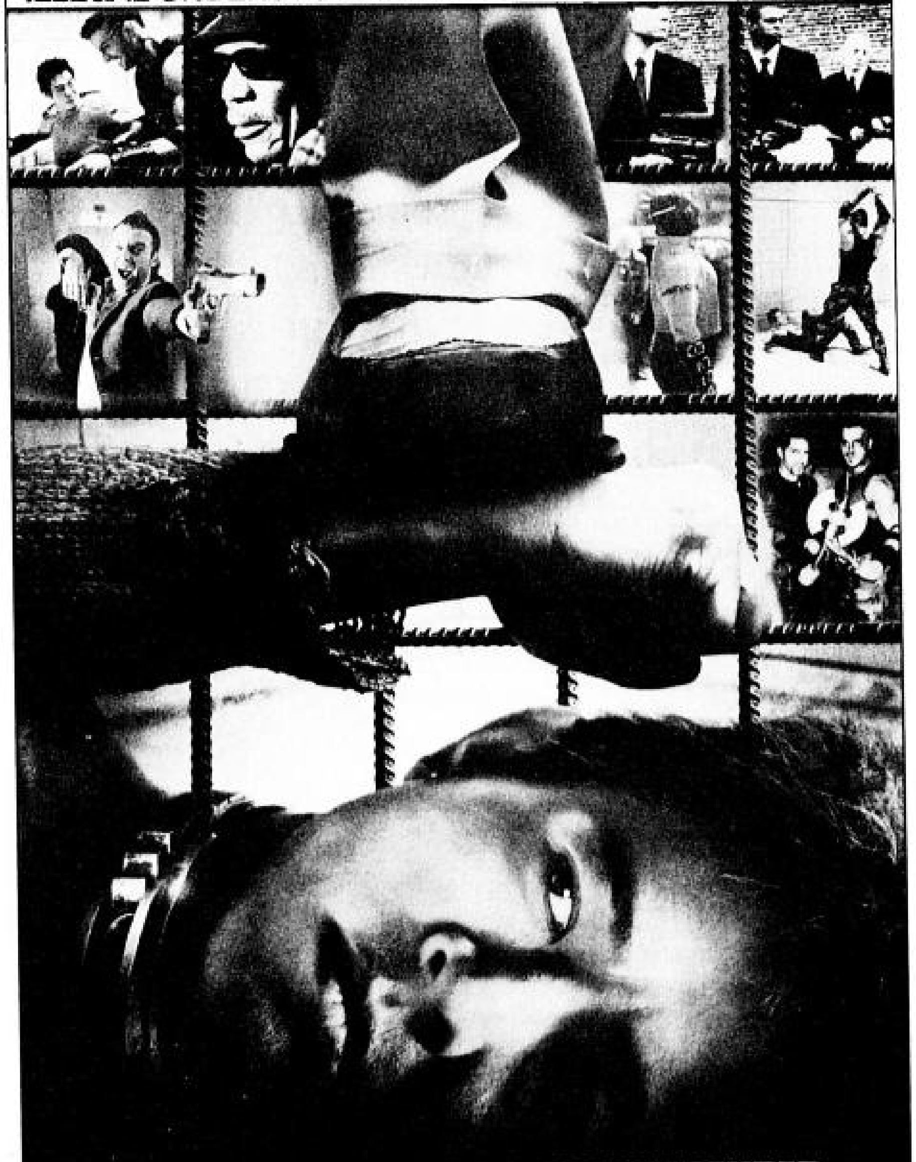

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8 RESERVED
9 RESERVED
10 STAR WARS : EPISODE III
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12 LA VISA LOCA

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2 HOUSE OF WAX
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4 STAR WARS : EPISODE III
5 UNLEASHED
6 LA VISA LOCA
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8 POOH HEFFALUMP MOVIE
9 BIKINI OPEN
10 CAN THIS BE LOVE
11 THE AMITYVILLE HORROR
12 STAR WARS : EPISODE III

sm city north edsa
1 STAR WARS : EPISODE III
2 HOUSE OF WAX
3 RESERVED
4 BIKINI OPEN
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6 AMITYVILLE HORROR
7 STAR WARS: EPISODE III
8 UNLEASHED

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1 UNLEASHED
2 HOUSE OF WAX
3 ARE WE THERE YET?
4 STAR WARS : EPISODE III
5 IN GOOD COMPANY
6 STAR WARS : EPISODE III
7 CAN THIS BE LOVE
8 THE AMITYVILLE HORROR
9 LA VISA LOCA
10 xXx 2 : THE NEXT LEVEL
11 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
12 BIKINI OPEN

sm city sta. mesa
1 STAR WARS : EPISODE III
2 HOUSE OF WAX
3 UNLEASHED
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5 RESERVED
6 BIKINI OPEN
7 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
8 AMITYVILLE HORROR
9 LA VISA LOCA
10 ANG LAGUSAN

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1 RESERVED
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3 STAR WARS : EPISODE III
4 UNLEASHED
5 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
6 THE AMITYVILLE HORROR
7 STAR WARS : EPISODE III
8 LA VISA LOCA
9 BIKINI OPEN
10 HOUSE OF WAX

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2 LA VISA LOCA
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4 UNLEASHED

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1 RESERVED
2 RESERVED
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2 LA VISA LOCA
3 STAR WARS : EPISODE III
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2 STAR WARS : EPISODE III
3 AMITYVILLE HORROR
4 BIKINI OPEN
5 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
6 LA VISA LOCA

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2 ALONE IN THE DARK
3 LA VISA LOCA
4 THE WEDDING DATE

sm city batangas
1 BIKINI OPEN
2 LA VISA LOCA
3 STAR WARS : EPISODE III
4 THE WEDDING DATE

sm city marilao
1 STAR WARS : EPISODE III
2 LA VISA LOCA
3 AMITYVILLE HORROR
4 STAR WARS : EPISODE III

sm city bacoor
1 AMITYVILLE HORROR
2 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
3 UNLEASHED
4 HOUSE OF WAX
5 STAR WARS : EPISODE III
6 LA VISA LOCA
7 BIKINI OPEN
8 STAR WARS : EPISODE III

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1 STAR WARS : EPISODE III
2 LA VISA LOCA
3 IN GOOD COMPANY
4 STAR WARS : EPISODE III

sm city lucena
1 STAR WARS : EPISODE III
2 STAR WARS : EPISODE III
3 LA VISA LOCA
4 THE WEDDING DATE

VISAYAS AND MINDANAO

sm city cebu
1 STAR WARS : EPISODEIII
2 RESERVED
3 STAR WARS : EPISODEIII
4 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
5 STAR WARS : EPISODE III
6 BIKINI OPEN
7 LA VISA LOCA
8 UNLEASHED

sm city iloilo
1 BIKINI OPEN
2 RESERVED
3 RING OF THE NIBELUNGS
4 SAHARA
5 LA VISA LOCA
6 STAR WARS : EPISODE III
7 RESERVED
8 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN

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2 STAR WARS : EPISODE III
3 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
4 STAR WARS : EPISODE III
5 LA VISA LOCA
6 UNLEASHED

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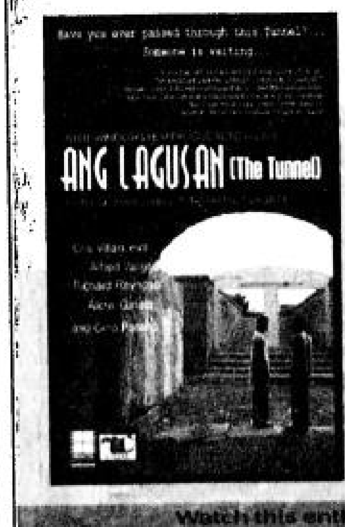

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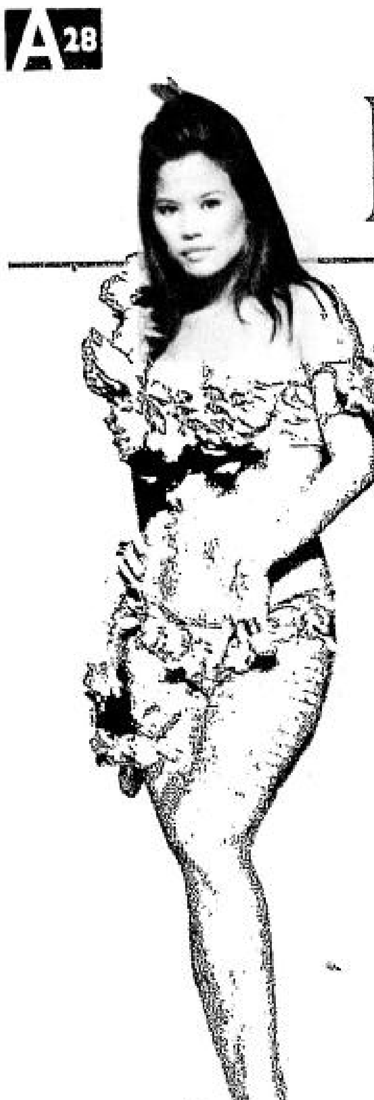

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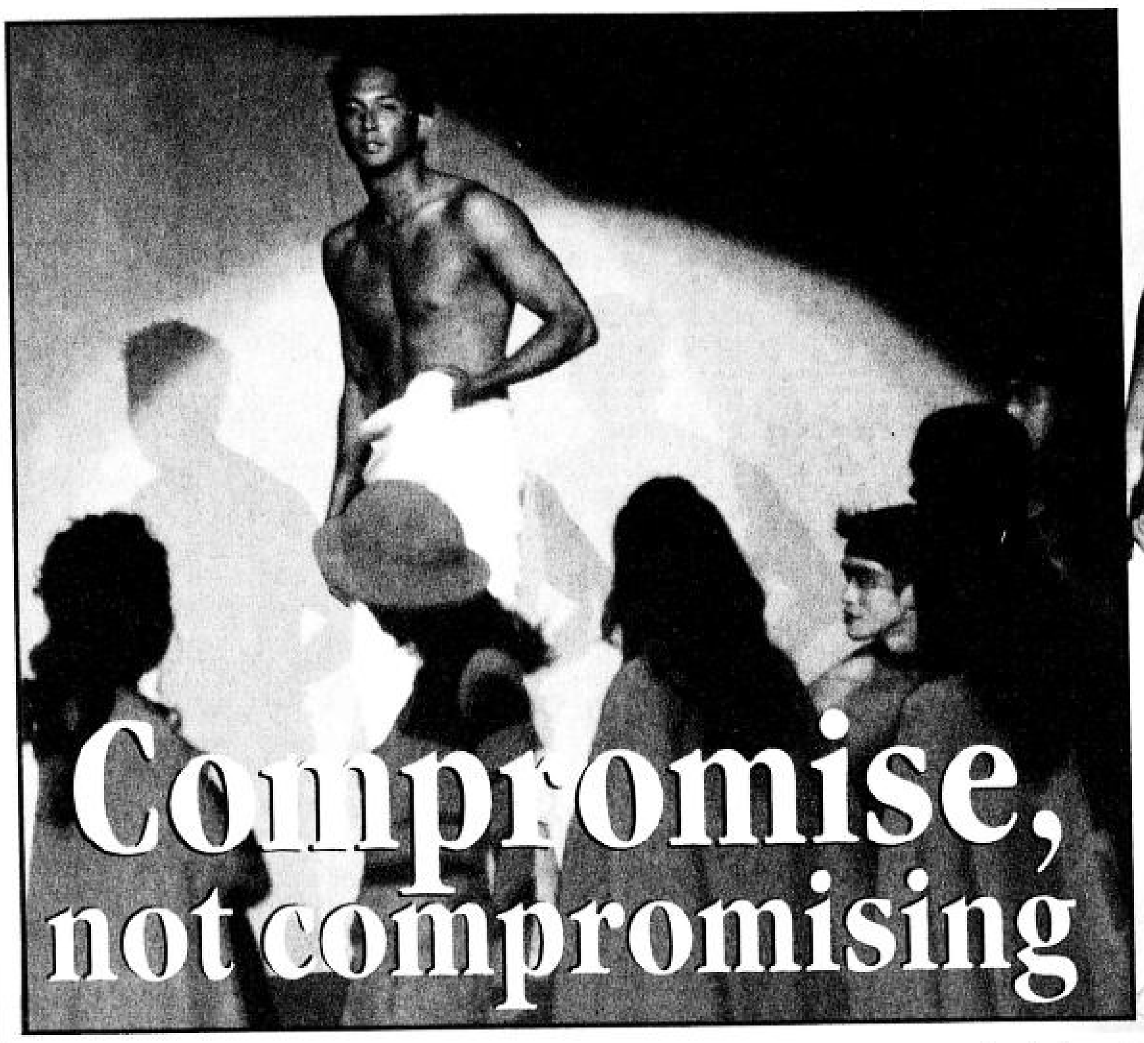


Compromise, not compromising

PAOLO Bediones: "Wholesome can also be sexy."

GEOFF Rodriguez and Maureen Larrazabal

By Marinel R. Cruz
Photos by Jim Guiao Punzalan

C STANDS for Compromise, according to Paolo Bediones, star of last week's highly successful "The C Show: The Carter Underwear Fashion Show" at the Araneta Coliseum.

"Carter got me (as endorser) because I'm wholesome, but people came here because it's an underwear show. So what's the middle ground? I'm here to prove that wholesome can be sexy. There has to be a compromise," Paolo said in an interview inside his dressing room minutes before the show.

"I hope people will get what they want and ... see me in a different light," he added.

Paolo said it took him two months to prepare for the show. He went to the gym, and cut down on rice and junk food. His diet consisted of fish, broiled chicken and protein shakes.

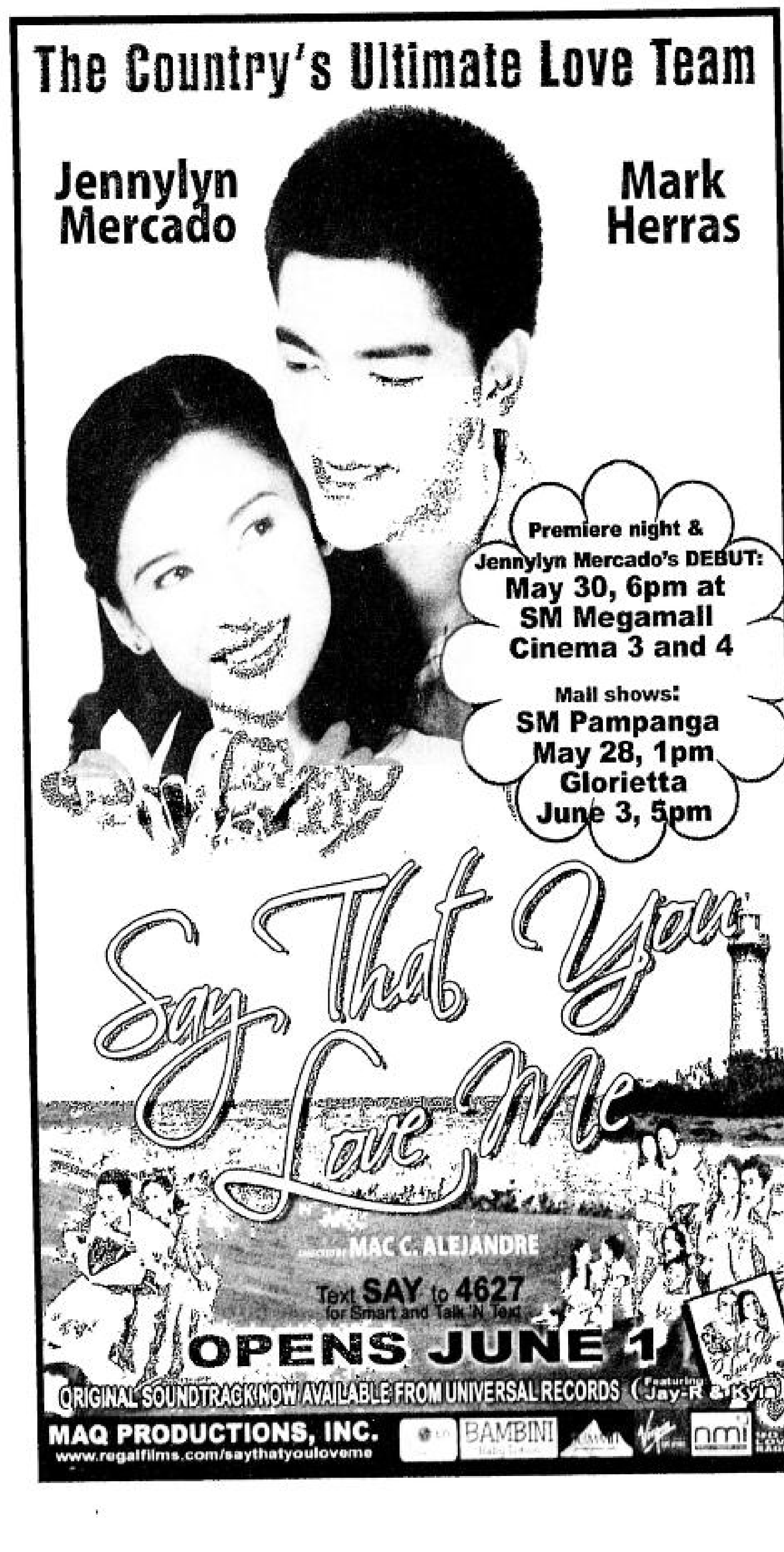
"Just an hour ago, I worked out. That's the secret of people who do bikini contests or ramp shows that require baring of skin. They work out to pump the muscle," he revealed. "Right now, I'm more nervous than excited. This is a first. I arrived early to have a feel of the venue."

Director Gerald "Yeng" Garcia said: "This is not your usual fashion show. "It's thematic, and divided into six segments. We used different kinds of music. We call the first segment, 'Coming Out.' The second is 'Party;' the third, 'Teens and Family;' the fourth, 'Classical;' fifth, 'Gymnastics;' and the last, 'The Revelation: Which is where Paolo comes in."

Other celebrities featured were: Maureen Larrazabal; Viva Hot Babes Andrea del Rosario, Gwen Garci and Jen Rosendahl; StarStruck winners Mark Herras and Jennylyn Mercado; Viva Hot Men Allen Dizon, Jerome Ocampo, and Mark Ethan Zulueta; Raymond Bagatsing; Hans Montenegro; Chinggay Andrada; Sherilyn Reyes; Faith Cuneta; Bb. Pilipinas beauty titlists Maricar Balagtas and Margaret Ann Bayot.

MARGARET Ann Bayot

RAYMOND Bagatsing



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No translation necessary here

By Bayani San Diego Jr.

There must be something in the water in Taiwan that breeds good-looking boy bands

SOME things don't require translation.

For instance, the unabashed, unfettered adulation from *chinovela* fanatics, who trooped full force to a recent press conference for Taiwanese boy band 5566 (that's Double 5 Double 6) at Sibil restaurant in Quezon City.

According to manager Sun Te Jong, 5566 rivals F4 (remember "Meteor Garden?") in Taiwan.

"In the Philippines and mainland China, 5566 and F4 may be equal in popularity," Sun said in Mandarin, translated by a Filipino-Chinese interpreter. "But in Taiwan, 5566 rules. Their latest show 'Mr. Fighting: Fight for Love' holds the record as the highest-rated in Taiwan."

They even churn out their own magazine, J Star, published by the manager's company, Jungiery.

5566 consists of Tony Sun, Zax Wang, Sam Wang and Jason Hsu. Only Tony and Zax are part of "Mr. Fighting."

Speaking of F4, the 5566 boys are actually good pals with their perceived rivals.

"The F4 members guest on the TV show that I host," Zax said. "We help them promote their projects."

But the big question remains. Who are hunkier and cuter—F4 or 5566?

"If you want to hear the truth, in our hearts, we believe we're better-looking," Zax quipped in jest.

"The F4 guys may be more handsome, but we have more appeal!" Tony added.

One thing's for sure, they're more self-confident!

Sun's wards arrived in Manila on May 20, to promote "Mr Fighting," an animé-themed *chinovela*, which will be launched May 28 on ABC 5. The three-day promo tour included visits to two Manila malls—SM North Edsa and 168 Shopping Mall in Binondo.

5566 in Chinatown? That must have been interesting.

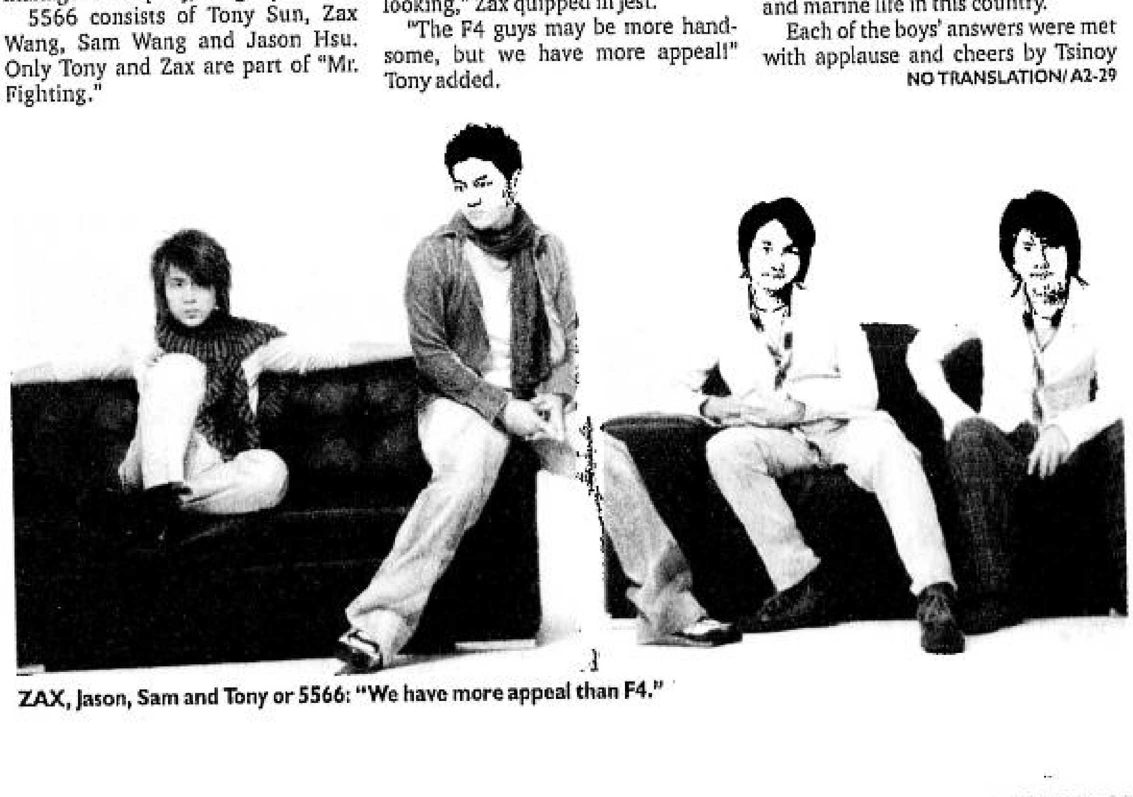
"It is our first time to visit the Philippines as a group," said Tony. "We're happy to do so now that we're complete."

Some of the band members have been to Manila on three previous occasions—to promote their TV shows "My MVP Valentine" and "West Side Story." Zax came as a tourist about eight years ago.

"I visited Cebu," Zak recalled. "I learned to appreciate scuba diving then because of the beautiful corals and marine life in this country."

Each of the boys' answers were met with applause and cheers by Tsinoy

NO TRANSLATION/ A2-29



ZAX, Jason, Sam and Tony or 5566: "We have more appeal than F4."

Pretty boy, pretty girl

JOHN Prats and Maxene Magalona team up for the first time on the big screen in "Playboy Kuba," a segment in Regal Entertainment's forthcoming trilogy, "Happily Ever After."

He is one of ABS-CBN's prized young stars. She is GMA's most refreshingly beautiful teen talent.

Their Regal movie recalls "Beauty and the Beast."

John plays Vince, a handsome boy from Manila who escapes to the province to avoid a girl. Maxene is Laura, a barrio lass who is being forced to marry a man she does not care for.

They meet and fall in love, but soon Vince dumps Laura and prepares to return to the city. This angers Laura's mother, a witch, who casts a spell on Vince, making him a hunchback.

"Happily Ever After" is directed by Maryo J. De Los Reyes.

Me, pregnan

By Marinel R. Cruz

Fil-Canadian actress Nancy Castiglione has denied rumors that the son of former congressman Romeo Jalosjos has gotten her pregnant.

Nancy, 24, said she had a physical condition that made child-bearing impossible for her at the moment.

"I wish I were pregnant, but I have what is called a polycystic ovary (POC), which prevents that," Nancy told INQUIRER Entertainment in an interview at her Pasig City home.

Fertility pills

The pretty actress admitted her relationship with Bullet Jalosjos, 25, only in March.

"I've consulted many doctors [about my condition]. I can still get pregnant; I just need to take fertility pills," Nancy explained.

PCO afflicts an estimated six to 10 percent of all women, according to the Polycystic Ovarian Syndrome Association. (www.pcosupport.org). The condition is characterized by the absence of menses, ovarian cysts in many—but not all—cases, and infertility in others.

Nancy met Bullet last year while taping for GMA 7's "Lagot Ka Isusumbong Kita" at the Dakak Beach Resort in Zamboanga del Norte.

"The whole cast was introduced to him; he was the F&B (food and beverage) manager," Nancy recalled.

How it started

She went swimming one night with several crew members and stepped on a sea urchin. "Bullet ran out when he heard the commotion. A waiter told him what had happened, and he got *calamansi* and rubbed it on my toes. It really, really hurt; I was crying."

The two ended up exchanging numbers. A few months later, she received a text message from Bullet. "He was in Manila. I took him out. He even had dinner with my ex [Paolo Contis] and me," Nancy said. "When he returned to Dakak after a week, we continued exchanging text messages. When I started having problems with my relationship and my friends, I called Bullet because I knew I could trust him to be unbiased. And I considered him safe because he wasn't in Manila."

Nancy and Paolo became sweethearts on Feb. 17, 2004 and lasted for eight months. In an earlier interview, the actor denied that a third party had caused the breakup.

After the split, Nancy flew to Canada to do an episode for "Extra Challenge."

"When I came back, I didn't want to stay in Manila. I called Bullet and told him I was going to fly out there," the actress recounted. "I stayed for a weekend and had 'therapy sessions' on the beach. I started going to Dakak regularly and Bullet started flying to Manila."

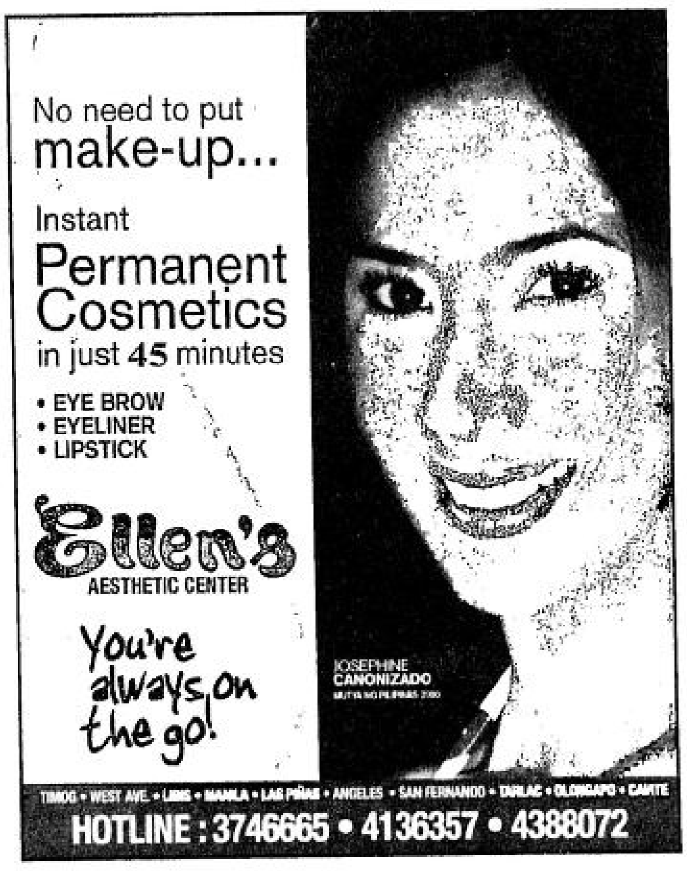
Rebound?

Exactly when romance started, Nancy couldn't tell. "I remember telling him: 'I don't know if this is just a rebound thing. I've sort of started feeling that you're the only one I can count on right now. I think it has sort of become a romantic thing.' He said, 'I'm not rebounding, and I sort of feel the same way.'"

Was it the real thing? She'd rather proceed with caution: "You always hope that a relationship would last forever. Bullet and I have been through enough relationships to know that we shouldn't be naïve and say that this is going to end up in marriage. But we're hoping ... you know."

NANCY Castiglione: "I wish I were, but ..."

JM GUIAO PUNZALAN



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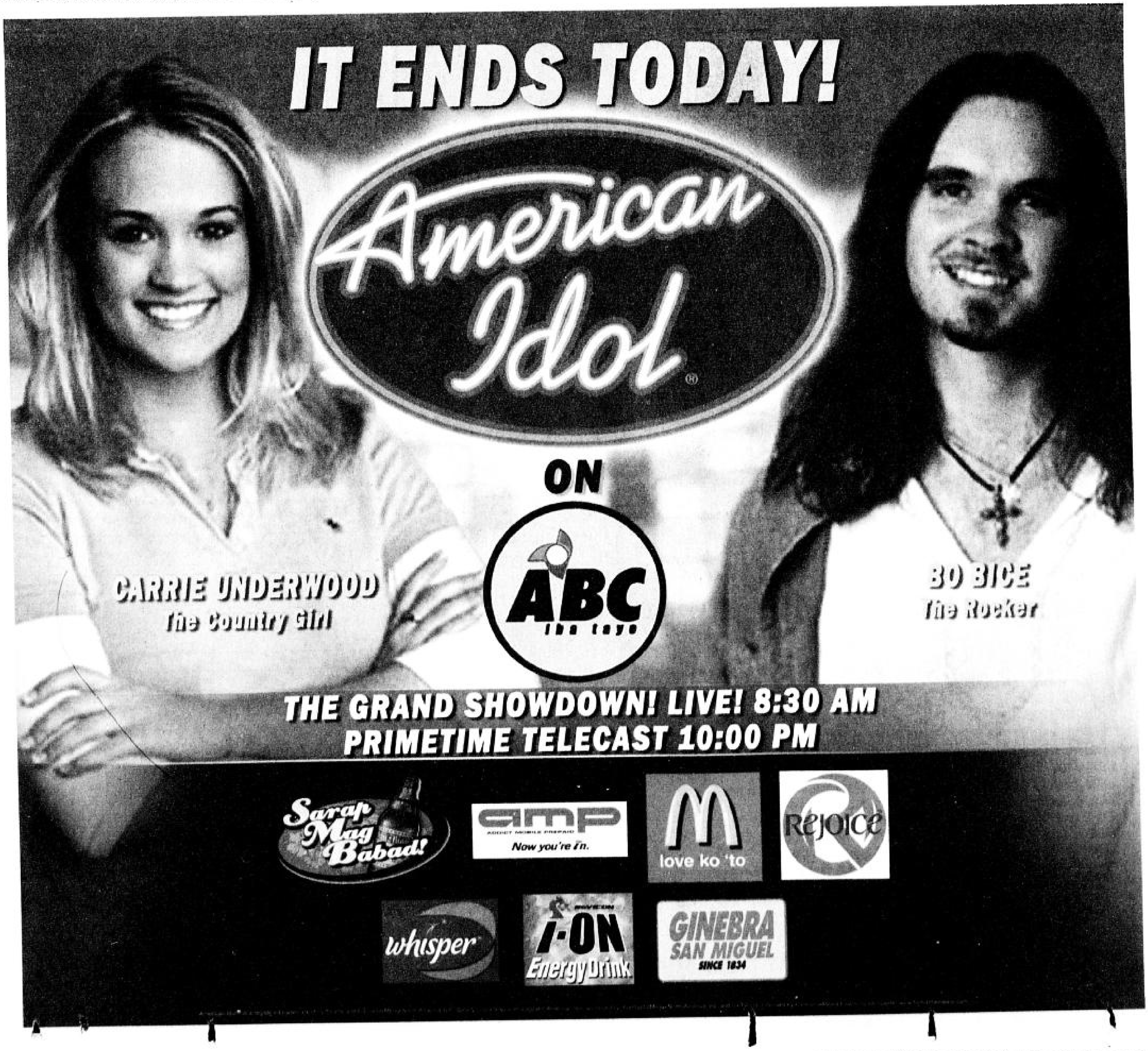

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1 STAR WARS Episode III • THX
2 STAR WARS Episode III
3 HOUSE OF WAX
4 UNLEASHED
5 LA VISA LOCA
6 STAR WARS Episode III
7 IN GOOD COMPANY
8 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
9 BIKINI OPEN
10 AMITYVILLE HORROR

ERMITA
536-7809 to 12

1 STAR WARS Episode III
2 AMITYVILLE HORROR
3 HOUSE OF WAX
4 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
5 LA VISA LOCA
6 BIKINI OPEN
7 UNLEASHED

METRO EAST
682-8193 • 682-8199

1 AMITYVILLE HORROR
2 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
3 BIKINI OPEN
4 HOUSE OF WAX
5 STAR WARS Episode III
6 IN GOOD COMPANY
7 UNLEASHED
8 LA VISA LOCA

NOVALICHES
935-3229/31

1 STAR WARS Episode III
2 LA VISA LOCA
3 UNLEASHED
4 HOUSE OF WAX
5 STAR WARS Episode III
6 BIKINI OPEN
7 RESERVE
8 RESERVE

PIONEER
687-5378

1 STAR WARS Episode III
2 LA VISA LOCA
3 STAR WARS Episode III
4 UNLEASHED

CITISQUARE MALABON
288-2575

1 STAR WARS Episode III
2 LA VISA LOCA
3 UNLEASHED
4 BOSO

CAINTA
240-4661

1 STAR WARS Episode III
2 LA VOSA LOCA
3 BIKINI OPEN
4 HOUSE OF WAX

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1 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
2 STAR WARS Episode III
3 LA VISA LOCA
4 BIKINI OPEN
5 RING OF THE NIBELUNGS

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(043) 312-5870

1 STAR WARS Episode III
2 LA VISA LOCA
3 IN GOOD COMPANY
4 ONG BAK
5 THE WEDDING DATE

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1 STAR WARS Episode III
2 LA VISA LOCA
3 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
4 IN GOOD COMPANY
5 BOSO

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1 STAR WARS Episode III
2 LA VISA LOCA
3 BIKINI OPEN
4 SIX

IMUS
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1 UNLEASHED
2 BIKINI OPEN
3 HOUSE OF WAX
4 STAR WARS Episode III
5 LA VISA LOCA
6 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN

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(045) 961-5270

1 AMITYVILLE HORROR
2 BIKINI OPEN
3 LA VISA LOCA
4 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
5 STAR WARS Episode III
6 HEAD IN THE CLOUDS

BACOLOD
[illegible]

1 SAHARA
2 STAR WARS Episode III
3 LA VISA LOCA
4 THE WEDDING DATE
5 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
6 GUESS WHO

ILOILO
(033) 336-8070

1 SAHARA
2 STAR WARS Episode III
3 LA VISA LOCA
4 RING OF THE NIBELUNGS
5 THE WEDDING DATE
6 BIKINI OPEN

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G4 GLORIETTA 4	1 STAR WARS EP. 3	2 UNLEASHED	3 THX STAR WARS EP. 3 GUARANTEED SEATS	
	4 THE AMITYVILLE HORROR	5 LA VISA LOKA	6 STAR WARS EP. 3	7 HOUSE OF WAX
GB1 GREENBELT 1	1 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN	2 STAR WARS EP. 3		
GB3 GREENBELT 3	1 THX STAR WARS EP. 3 GUARANTEED SEATS	2 THX STAR WARS EP. 3 GUARANTEED SEATS		
	3 HOUSE OF WAX GUARANTEED SEATS	4 UNLEASHED GUARANTEED SEATS	5 STAR WARS EP. 3 GUARANTEED SEATS	
ATC ALABANG TOWN CENTER	1 THX STAR WARS EP. 3	2 STAR WARS EP. 3		
	3 UNLEASHED	4 HOUSE OF WAX	5 STAR WARS EP. 3	
ACC AYALA CENTER CEBU	1 STAR WARS EP. 3	2 STAR WARS EP. 3	3 UNLEASHED	4 LA VISA LOKA

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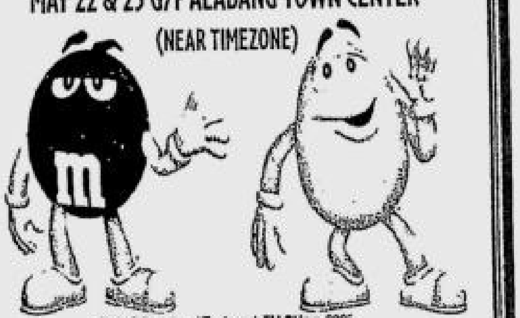

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⑦ Star Wars Ep. 3

EVENTS! EVENTS!

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Market! Market! Harvest Festival

Parikitan Parade

May 25, 2005, Wednesday, 5pm
with Nadine Samonte and Benj Pasia

Another kiddie show gets the giggles

VIEWFINDER

Nestor U. Torre

ABS-CBN's "Goin' Bulilit" has effectively revived the over successful format of "Ang TV," the kiddie comedy show that helped launch the show biz careers of some stars a number of years ago.

Like its predecessor, "Goin' Bulilit" fields a talented bunch of young zanies, some of whom can be expected to also come into their own as stars in TV seasons to come.

Unlike "Ang TV," however, "Goin' Bulilit" has come in for criticism because it has cynically chosen to involve its young actors in some rather adult situations and characters.

We trust that the people behind the show will soon realize the error of their ways, and make the show more child-friendly, as it should be.

In any case, the Channel 2 show has become so successful that some of its young talents have been given another show to do—contrastingly, it's a nightly drama series, "Mga Anghel na walang Langit," where they get to cry a lot. Such, uh, versatility!

In addition, "Goin' Bulilit's" good ratings numbers have prompted GMA 7 to launch its own kiddie comedy show, "Junior Bubble Gang." We've watched the new program, but we can't really get a good handle on it as a separate production because it's so similar to the channel 2 program.

Still, we must note that some of the channel 7 show's young talents are lively and entertaining, so they could also achieve solo stardom in the future.

Thus, something can be said for imitation or emulation of this sort: it gives other new talents more opportunities to show what they can do.

With "Junior Bubble Gang," young Pinoy talents now have another showcase for their abilities, and that's all to the good.

We wish, though, that our TV people would strive to be more original. And keep those kiddie shows truly child-friendly, please.

On Star Movies

ON STAR movies at 10:50 p.m. today, "Spanish Apartment (L'Auberge Espagnole)" stars **Roman Duris, Judith Godreche** and **Audrey Tautou. Cedric Klapisch**'s comedy is about young Xavier who, through cosmopolitan adventures and comic tribulations finds his own unexpected place in a mixed-up, multi-cultural, modern world. Bursting with energy, optimism and inventiveness, the film was a hit in France and an award-winner at festivals around the globe, and received six Cesar (France's Oscars) nominations, including Best Film and Best Director.

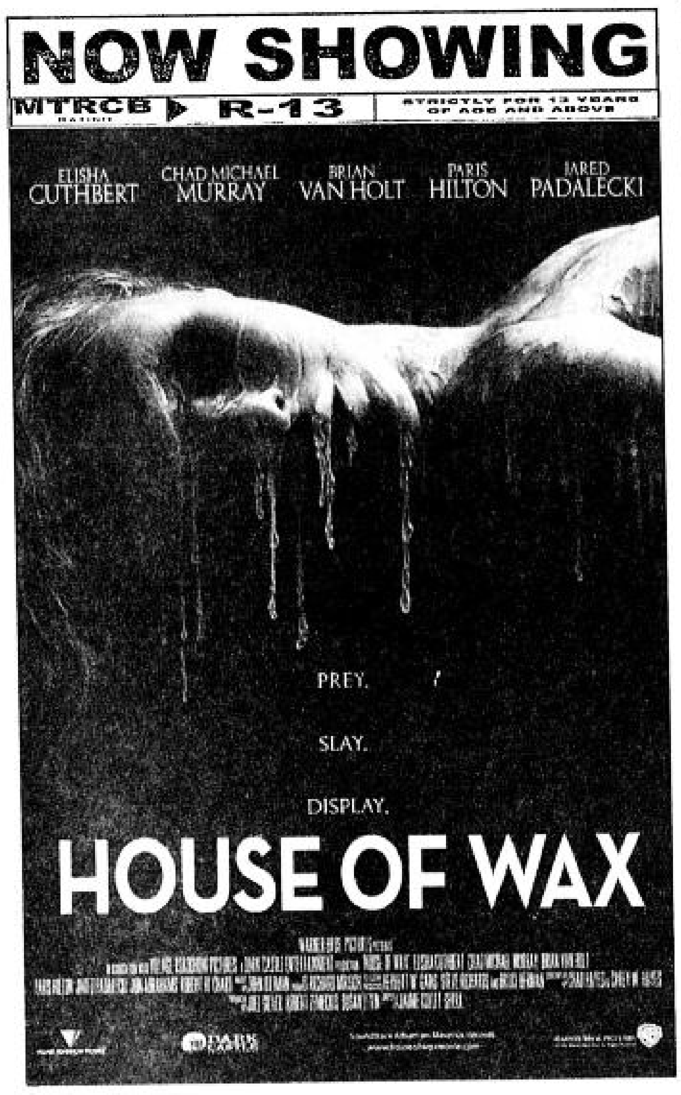
May 31 at 7:25 p.m., "Nemesis Game." Introverted college students Sara (**Carly Pope**) stays away from her classmates, choosing to spend time with Vern, the owner of a comic book shop. Together, they share a passion for brain teasers and riddles. But, when the riddles Sara solves result in the deaths of those around her, she realizes that she's involved in a more lethal game than she expected.

Debut recital

OLIVER Salonga, first prize winner in piano competitions in Manila and Florida, USA, will perform in his debut recital in Baguio City on Saturday, at the Baguio Country Club Ballroom.

His program includes Liszt's "Transcendental Etudes," Beethoven's "Sonata in F Minor Op. 57," Chopin's "Fantaisie Impromptu" and "Scherzo No.2 in B Flat Major," among others.

On June 12, Salonga is soloist of the Manila Philharmonic Orchestra in a special Independence Gala Concert featuring Liszt's Piano Concerto No. 2 in A Major. He will be joined by cellist **Victor Michael Coo**, who is the MPO soloist in Dvorak's Cello Concerto. The concert will be held at the Philamlife Theater. Call (02) 9017156 or 0918-7376901.



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	5 Star Wars Episode 3	
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CINEMA 3 STAR WARS : EPISODE III - GP 11:35, 2:25, 5:15, 8:05
CINEMA 4 HOUSE OF WAX - GP 11:35, 2:10, 4:45, 7:20, 10:00
CINEMA 5 UNLEASHED - R13
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SHANG CINEPLEX
① STAR WARS III MTRCB: GP 10.40, 1:30, 4:20, 7:10, 10:00
② KINGDOM OF HEAVEN MTRCB. PG-13 12.20, 3:30, 6 40, 9:50
③ HOUSE OF WAX MTRCB. R-13 11:25, 2.00, 4:35, 7:10, 9.50
④ STAR WARS III MTRCB: GP 12:30, 3:20, 6:10, 9:00
PREMIERE THEATRE STAR WARS III MTRCB: GP 1:00, 3:50
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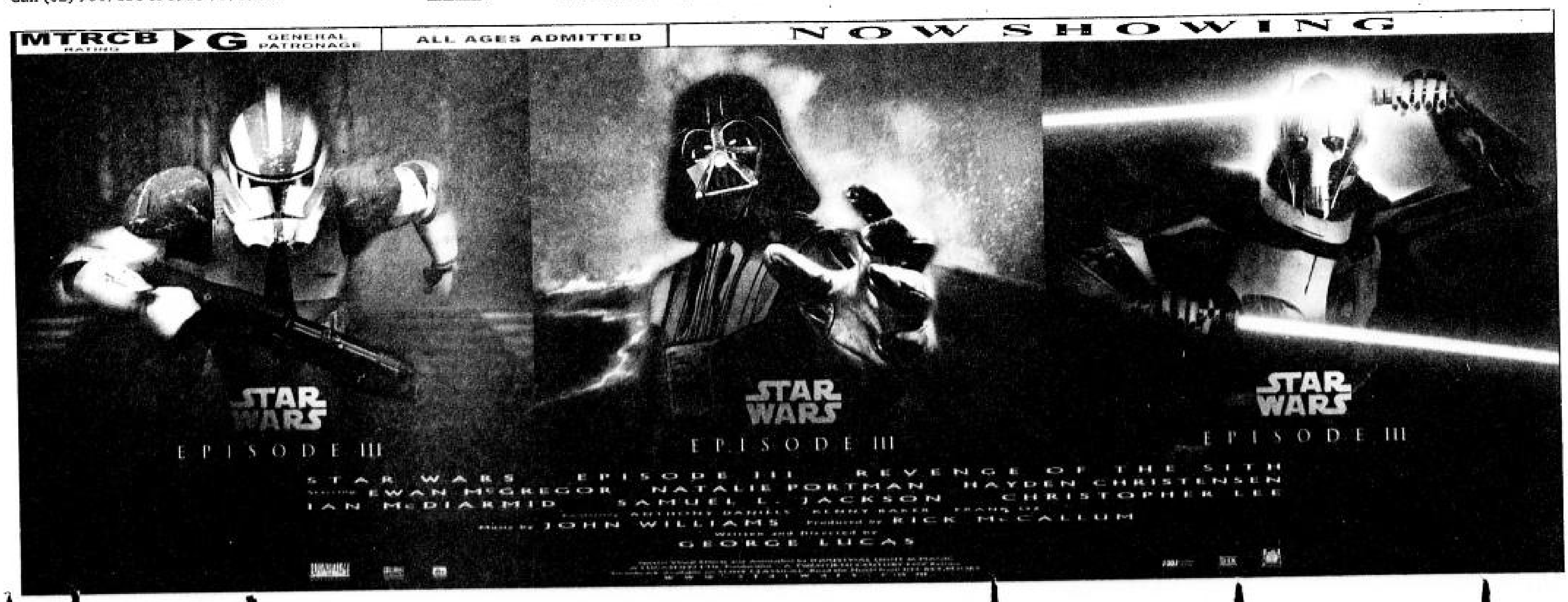

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SEC dissolves Pacific Plans subsidiary

FLEET EXPANSION
A new Cebu Pacific airplane lands at Runway 06 of the Ninoy Aquino International Airport. Cebu Pacific took delivery of its first brand-new Airbus A320 from Airbus Industrie of Tolouse, France. The new aircraft, with a seating configuration of 179, will be used to servie the Davao-Singapore route. ROGERMARGALLO

By Elizabeth L. Sanchez

THE SECURITIES and Exchange Commission (SEC) has revoked the certificate of incorporation of pre-need firm Lifetime Plans Inc. (LPI), effectively dissolving it as a company, officials at the SEC said yesterday.

The decision dealt a fresh blow to the Yuchengco-owned pre-need group, which is still tackling a petition by its beleaguered unit, Pacific Plans Inc. (PPI), with a local court to suspend payments and undergo rehabilitation.

In a statement, LPI said it would question the SEC's move. PPI has also said it would temporarily cut off funding support for tuition fees until issues with the SEC have been cleared.

"(We were surprised by the SEC's decision). In the first place, even before they reveal it to any other party they should have copy-furnished us as a basic requirement for due process. It has not been done," PPI spokesperson and legal counsel Jeanette Tecson said following a hearing of PPI's petition at the Makati City Hall yesterday.

The revocation of LPI's registration papers was disclosed by the Office of the Solicitor General, the legal counsel for the SEC, during the hearing yesterday.

Officials of SEC also claimed that PPI and LPI were properly informed yesterday through a letter sent to the LPI office.

SEC Commission Secretary Gerard Lukbah said the SEC had issued a stern warning last Friday to LPI saying it had 48 hours to comply with the capital requirements for pre-need firms.

Lukban said the SEC allowed PPI to spin off its pension, memorial and a portion of its educational plans in August last year to LPI and register LPI as a company subject to a condition that PPI would show proof that it transferred assets to LPI.

PPI should provide proof of collection of receivables worth P40.6 million and transfer the ownership of transportation equipment with a net book value of P5.7 million to LPI within 30 days from Aug. 12, or the date the SEC allowed LPI to register as a pre-need company.

PPI subscribed to LPI's capital stock worth P205.14 million but the shares of LPI would only be issued to PPI after it offered proof that LPI indeed owned these assets. To date, the SEC said neither PPI nor LPI had complied with the requirement.

SEC/B4

MAYNILAD BIDDING

DMCI taps Marubeni

By Christine A. Gaylican
and Elizabeth L. Sanchez

CONSTRUCTION conglomerate DMCI Holdings Inc. said it would form a consortium with a foreign group to strengthen its bid to acquire a controlling stake in Metro Manila's west concessionaire Maynilad Water Services Inc.

A consortium led by ING Barings and the Ayala Corp. earlier expressed interest in acquiring Maynilad from the Lopez group. The Ayala's already control the other water concessionaire, Manila Water Co. Inc.

Sources said DMCI was forging a joint venture with companies that include Marubeni

DMCI/B4

WHAT'S INSIDE

Imports still declining; March shipments down 4% /B3
Jueteng for the right one BREAKTIME/B2
Wider tax exemption coverage sought /B8

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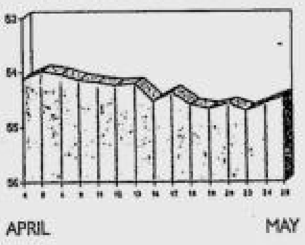


₱54.435 = $1
As of 5 p.m., May 25, 2005

¥107.46 = $1
As of 5 p.m., May 24, 2005

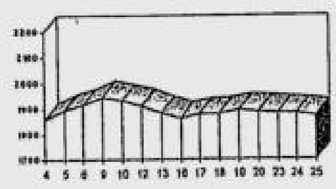
GOLD: $418.60-419.10
per ounce Hong Kong, May 25, 2005

May 25, 2005 Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Dollar Equivalent	Peso Equivalent
United States	Dollar	0.794786203	1.000000	54.6460
Japan	Yen	0.007388	0.009296	0.5080
United Kingdom	Pound	1.452392	1.827400	99.8601
Hongkong	Dollar	0.102162	0.128540	7.0242
Switzerland	Franc	0.646746	0.813736	44.4674
Canada	Dollar	0.630933	0.793840	43.3802
Singapore	Dollar	0.480176	0.604157	33.0148
Australia	Dollar	0.605782	0.762195	41.6509
Bahrain	Dinar*	2.108298	2.652661	144.9573
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.211943	0.266667	14.5723
Brunei	Dollar	0.478729	0.602337	32.9153
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000084	0.000106	0.0058
Thailand	Baht	0.019865	0.024994	1.3658
UAE	Dirham	0.216398	0.272272	14.8786
Euro	Euro	1	1.258200	68.7556
Argentina	Peso	0.275728	0.346921	18.9578
Brazil	REAL	0.327342	0.411862	22.5066
Denmark	Kroner	0.134286	0.168959	9.2329
India	Rupee	0.018292	0.023015	1.2577
Malaysia	Ringgit	0.209182	0.263193	14.3824
Mexico	New Peso	0.07255	0.091283	4.9883
New Zealand	Dollar	0.566288	0.712504	38.9355
Norway	Kroner	0.123712	0.155654	8.5059
Pakistan	Rupee	0.013358	0.016807	0.9184
South Africa	Rand	0.121323	0.152648	8.3416
Korea	Won	0.000792	0.000997	0.0545
Sweden	Kroner	0.109085	0.137251	7.5002
Syria	Pound	0.015311	0.019264	1.0527
Taiwan	Nt Dollar	0.025401	0.031959	1.7464
Venezuela	Bolivar	0.00037	0.000466	0.0255

STOCK MARKET

Stocks extend losses on political jitters

PSE COMPOSITE INDEX



(See stock market report on Page B3)

SHARE prices closed 0.62 percent lower yesterday on continuing political concerns sparked by allegations of President Gloria Arroyo's family being linked to an illegal gambling racket, dealers said.

They said the market extended losses in very thin trade for a fourth day as investors looked in vain for a positive lead to snap the downturn, with the latest import figures an additional disappointment.

The Philippine Stock Exchange composite index fell 11.58 points to 1,869.50 after trading between 1,861.39 and 1,882.24. Turnover was 221 million shares worth P580 million.

The broader all-shares index fell 5.59 points to 1,144.44.

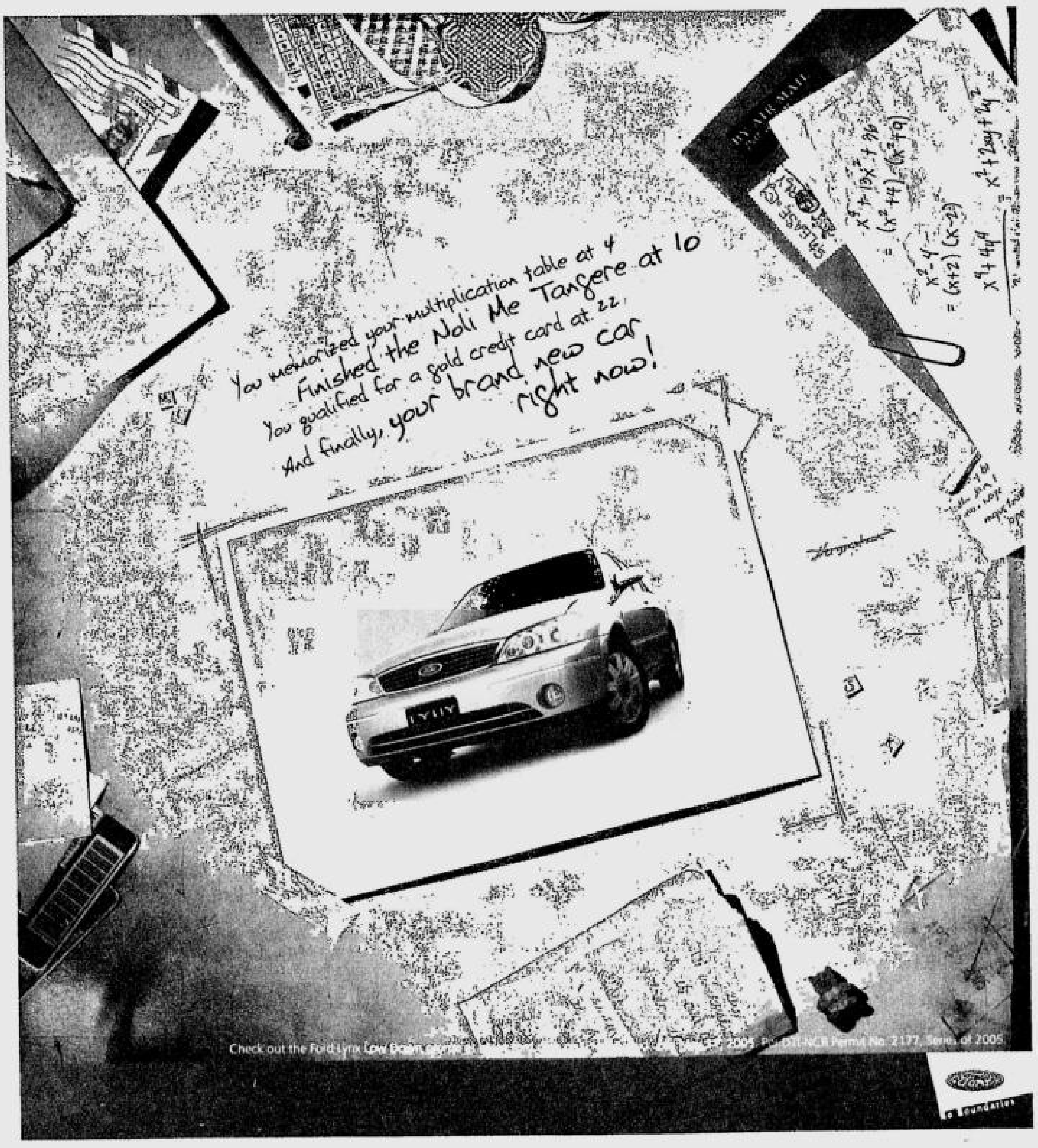
Losers led gainers 40 to 17, with 52 stocks unchanged.

"Investors were reluctant to move due to a lack of inspiring news on the economy and the corporate front," said Lawrence de Leon of Accord Capital Equities.

He said disappointing import figures for March, which showed a fall of 4 percent, may also have dampened sentiment. The Philippines imports many of the components used in its key electronics export industry so the data suggests overseas sales could be under pressure in the months ahead.

"Investors will remained sidelined (until) the jueteng controversy surrounding the Arroyo family is resolved," said Jose Vistan of AB Capital Securities.

Opposition figures and newspapers have charged that Arroyo's family is linked to the illegal numbers game known as "jueteng." Arroyo has shrugged off the charges. AFP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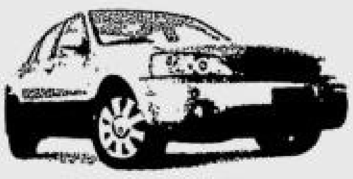

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Jueteng for the right one

BREAKTIME

Conrado R. Banal III

THOSE tough guys in control of our very own PNP, or the Philippine National Police, must think that we, the public, have instant noodles for brains.

Last Tuesday, the police top brass called for a press conference to announce that, without much ado, thank you, the PNP already wiped out "jueteng" in three regions.

Wow! It should be a world record of sorts in the annals of the police force—wiping out something as widespread and deeply rooted in society as jueteng.

Based on the claim of top guys in PNP, the police did the miracle in only one working day, after Gloriaetta herself declared an ALL OUT war against illegal gambling.

Again—that was only ONE working day. Such wonder! Mind you, it took the whole of six days to create the universe.

* * *

YOU see, this cute administration of Gloriaetta declared the war over the weekend. The PNP therefore had only last Monday to annihilate jueteng in those three regions.

To wipe jueteng out from the face of the earth once and for all, the police chief also gave his men only another 48 hours. Double wow!

They probably expected us to lap it all up, and we should therefore put to rest this issue on jueteng corruption in the highest places.

Sorry, boss, but such an instant noodle tactic may not work anymore, no matter how stupid you think we, the public, are.

The "wiping out" news did nothing to the allegation that certain guys in high places were on the jueteng take.

On the contrary, it only proved that corruption really existed in the jueteng racket. It was that easy to wipe it out in three regions, right? Why did the PNP do it only now?

* * *

AT best, of course, the news could serve as a sign that this cute jueteng-dogged administration of Gloriaetta, after all, was serious in its campaign—okay, ALL OUT campaign—against jueteng.

Imagine, three regions in one day! Hundreds of millions of pesos in jueteng take! All gone down the drain!

Gloriaetta swore that she, personally, never got a single centavo of the jueteng pay-off. I am sure that some people, but perhaps not all, could believe her.

But such is the burden of being a public figure. Whatever you do, you will always have both believers and doubters.

If, before men of the cloth, Gloriaetta swore that she was not on the take, then WHO was? Somebody definitely was. Or else there could never be jueteng.

* * *

LOOK, in one freaking single hot summer's day, as the PNP top officers announced, the police could stamp out jueteng in three huge regions. It's not as if those three regions are only the size of every newsman's ego.

Jueteng has existed in this country for centuries, even during the times when Magellan was still a boy scout, and Lapu-lapu did not yet have a fish named after him.

Several administrations before this cute one could not wipe out jueteng. Even when our civil rights did not exist during martial rule, the dictatorship could not wipe out jueteng.

Of course the government tried to do something about it, by legalizing it, during the time of the man named Band...Wrist Band. Remember him? And so what happened to him was, they sent him to jail because of the same jueteng.

And here is the PNP, under this cute administration, announcing that the police did what nobody else could do before—and all in one day! We have been waiting all along for the right somebody to get rid of jueteng. You know—jueteng for the right one!

* * *

BUT then again, the instant noodles in us cannot help but wonder how was that possible.

Because if it was that easy to do, just all in a day's work of the police force, the next "Lucky Me" question is, why did this cute administration not perform such a miracle during its four years or so in office.

Does it mean that, all along, our government has been tolerating this racket, if not actually cheering its operation, which by the way is estimated to make only more than P30 billion every year, whether in good or in bad times, rain or shine, with or without the BIR tax campaign?

Look, ma, it's also tax free!

Anyway, at least to most of my neighbors, the news about a one-day success of this cute administration's ALL OUT war against jueteng is just a dead giveaway.

Why could the government not wipe out jueteng for years and years? Well, simple, my dear dimple, and it's because a lot of guys, and some of them were big, were certainly on the take.

Quick, did you hear of any jueteng lord who spent a single hour in jail? Despite everybody knowing who they are?

Let's see if this cute administration can perform another miracle.

* * *

BUT the one miracle that this cute administration could perform, no sweat, concerns our electricity rate. Just when nobody was looking, our power rates went up again to become the second highest power rate in all of Asia.

And that is, mind you, even without the just-signed law on the VAT on electricity.

That we have the second highest power rate in these parts, is the obvious proof that something is wrong here.

To explain the increase in our electricity bills, this cute administration has been blaming the increase in world price of fossil fuel, such as oil and coal, which we have to import.

By using the instant mami between our ears, we ask ourselves why, if everything is due to world prices of oil, do other countries near us have much lower electricity rates than ours.

If despite having to pay for the same high cost of oil, other countries could keep their rates low, how come we still managed to keep our power rates as the second highest in Asia?

To think, this cute administration is even subsidizing electricity!

Something is wrong. Okay, wrong. It should be, something is terribly wrong. And I think it has something to do with this state-owned monopoly called Napocor.

We have been meaning to sell the monster, but up to now, nothing seems to be happening. We just cannot seem do it.

And now that the VAT on electricity is upon us, I don't know we could ever hope to privatize this colossal.

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August 24, 2005 8:30am-5:30pm Makati Shangri-La Hotel

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PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE

(As of Wednesday, May 25, 2005)

STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
BANKS & FINANCIAL SERVICES					
BANKS					
Asiatrust Dev. Bank Inc.	3.65	3.65	3.65	3.65	4,000
Banco de Oro Univ. Bank	27.5	27.5	27.5	27.5	17,400
Bank of the Phil. Islands	49.5	49.5	48	49	829,200
China Banking Corp.	740	740	740	740	10
Citystate Savings Bank	17.5	17.5	17.5	17.5	1,000
Export and Ind. Bank Inc.	0.61	0.61	0.61	0.61	880,000
Equitable PCI Bank Inc.	49	49	49	49	122,700
International Exch. Bank	18.75	18.75	18.75	18.75	65,000
Metropolitan Bank & Trust	32	32	31	31.5	332,400
Philippine National Bank	33	33	33	33	22,000
Rizal Comm. Banking Corp.	11.75	11.75	11.75	11.75	9,000
Security Bank Corp.	30	30.5	30	30.5	86,000
Union Bank of the Phil.	27	27	27	27	127,900
FINANCIAL SERVICES					
Manulife Financial Corp.	2420	2420	2420	2420	280
Sun Life Financial Inc.	1680	1685	1680	1685	60
COMMERCIAL & INDUSTRIAL					
COMMUNICATION					
ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp.	12.5	12.5	12.5	12.5	8,500
Digital Telecom Phils Inc.	1.04	1.06	1.02	1.04	2,308,00
Globe Telecom Inc.	825	830	815	825	31,86
Ipeople Inc.	3.4	3.55	3.4	3.5	29,000
Pilipino Tel. Corp.	3.15	3.2	3.15	3.2	849,000
Phil. Long Dis Tel Co.	1450	1450	1440	1440	67,24
Ivantage Corp.	0.7	0.7	0.67	.67	940,00
Philweb Corp.	0.016	0.016	0.016	0.016	2,700,000
POWER, ENERGY & OTHER UTILITIES					
Manila Electric Co. A	15.75	15.75	15.5	15.5	18,700
Manila Electric Co. B	23	23	22.25	22.25	378,200
Manila Water Co. Inc.	6.1	6.2	6	6.1	2,786,000
Petron Corp.	3.25	3.25	3.2	3.2	2,614,000
Trans-Asia Oil and Energy	1.12	1.14	1.12	1.14	43,000
TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
Asian Terminals Inc.	1.74	1.78	1.74	1.78	3,721,000
Aboitiz Trans. Sys. Corp.	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.5	4,000
Int'l Container Term'l Sv	7.5	7.5	7.4	7.4	115,000
Keppel Phils. Marine, Inc	0.58	0.58	0 58	0.58	150,000
CONSTRUCTION & OTHER RELATED PRODUCTS					
Engineering Equip. Inc.	0.58	0.59	0.58	.59	30,000
Holcim Philippines Inc.	3.1	3.1	3	3.05	596,000
FOOD, BEVERAGES & TOBACCO					
Jollibee Foods Corp.	29	29.5	28.5	29.5	193,700
San Miguel Corp. A	58	58.5	58	58.5	36,300
San Miguel Corp. B	84.5	84.5	83.5	84.5	251,700
Universal Robina Corp.	12.5	12.5	12.5	12.5	53,000
Vitarich Corp.	0.27	0.27	0.27	0.27	100,000
HOLDING FIRMS					
Abacus Con Res & Hdg B	0.008	0.008	0.008	0.008	5,000,000
Ayala Corp.	6.7	6.7	6.5	6.6	4,313,000
Alsons Cons. Res. Inc.	0.41	0.41	0.41	.41	200,000
Aboitiz Equity Ventures	4.8	4.8	4.8	4.8	1,779,000
Ajo.Net Holdings Inc.	0.029	0.029	0.027	.028	6,900,000
A. Soriano Corp.	1.96	1.96	1.94	1.94	240,000
APC Group Inc.	0.29	0.29	0.29	.29	50,000
Alcorn Gold Res. Corp.	0.0055	0.0055	0.0055	0.0055	4,000,000
Benpres Holdings Corp.	0.94	0.94	0.93	.93	1,930,000
Southeast Asian Cement	0.3	0.32	0.28	.28	1,950,000
DMCI Holdings Inc.	2.44	2.46	2.42	2.42	80,000
Ever-Gotesco Resources	0.035	0.035	0.035	0.035	500,000
Fil-Hispano Holdings Corp.	8	8	7.9	7.9	236,000
First Phil Hldgs Corp.	45	45	44.5	44.5	48,400
Global Equities Inc.	0.08	0.0825	0.08	.0825	1,100,000
Ionics Inc.	1.2	1.2	1.2	1.2	5,000
J.G. Summit Holdings Inc.	3.15	3.2	3.15	3.2	12,000
Megaworld Corp.	1.38	1.38	1.34	1.34	831,000
Metro Pacific Corp.	0.35	0.35	0.34	0.35	3,500,000
East Asia Power Res. Corp.	0.2	0.2	0.2	.2	30,000
Roxas Holdings Inc.	0.92	0.92	0.92	.92	650,000
SM Investments Corp.	247	248	247	247	556,940
Uniwide Holdings Inc.	0.16	0.165	0.16	0.165	1,030,000
Waterfront Phils. Inc.	0.21	0.21	0.21	.21	500,000
MANUFACTURING, DISTRIBUTION & TRADING					
Euro-Med Lab. Phil. Inc.	2.85	2.85	2.85	2.85	1,000
HOTEL, RECREATION & OTHER SERVICES					
Belle Corp.	1.1	1.12	1.1	1.12	900,000
Fairmont Holdings Inc.	0.78	0.78	0.78	.78	10,000
Leisure & Resorts Corp.	1.24	1.26	1.22	1.26	787,000
Manila Jockey Club	3	3	3	3	8,000
Premiere Ent. Prod. Inc.	0.31	0 31	0 3	0.31	440,000
BONDS, PREFERRED & WARRANTS					
Abs-Cbn Hldgs. Corp. (Pdr)	12	12.25	12	12.25	72,100
PLDT (10% Pref) Series P	11	11	11	11	100
PLDT (10% Pref) Series T	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	1,200
PLDT (10% Pref.) Series U	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	1,400
PLDT (10% Pref) Series W	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	2,100
PLDT (10% Pref) Series X	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	500
PLDT (10% Pref) Series Y	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	1,400
PLDT (10% Pref) Series Z	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	300
PLDT 10% Pref Series Aa	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	2,300
OTHERS					
Centro Escolar University	6.7	6 7	6.7	6.7	5,000
PROPERTY					
Ayala Land Inc.	7.3	7.3	7.2	7.3	9,901,000
Cebu Holdings Inc.	0.91	0.92	0.91	.92	30,000
Cyber Bay Corp.	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	100,000
EIB Realty Developers Inc.	0.16	0.16	0.15	.15	220,000
Empire East Land Inc.	0.36	0 36	0.35	.35	2,160,000
Edsa Prop. Holdings Inc.	0.8	0.8	0.8	.8	40,000
Filinvest Land Inc	1.44	1.44	1.4	1.4	7,095,000
Highlands Prime Inc.	2.4	2.4	2.4	2.4	5,000
Keppel Phils. Prop. Inc.	0.55	0.55	0.55	0.55	10,000
City & Land Developers	1.72	1.72	1.72	1.72	13,000
Philippine Estates Corp	0.135	0.14	0.135	.14	200,000
Robinsons Land Corp.	4.85	4.85	4.85	4.85	1,906,000
Phil. Realty and Holdings	0.19	0.19	0.19	.19	60,000
SM Development Corp.	1.52	1.52	1.52	1.52	54,000
SM Prime Holdings Inc.	7.4	7 4	7.3	7.4	3,131,000
MINING					
Abra Mining & Industrial	0.0065	0.0065	0.0065	.0065	20,000,000
Atlas Cons. Min & Dev't	4	4	4	4	2,000
Lepanto Cons Mng. Co. A	0.29	0.3	0.29	0.29	3,870,000
Lepanto Cons. Mng. Co B	0.3	0 32	0.3	.31	770,000
Manila Mining Corp. A	0.013	0.013	0.013	.013	36,500,000
Manila Mining Corp. B	0.018	0.018	0.017	0.018	51,000,000
Omico Corp.	0.006	0.0065	0.006	.006	19,000,000
Philex Mining Corp A	0.83	0.83	0.83	0.83	750,000
Philex Mining Corp. B	0.98	0 98	0.97	.97	760,000
Semirara Mining Corp.	29	29	27.5	27.5	109,300
United Paragon Mining Co.	0.17	0.17	0.17	.17	20,000
OIL					
Oriental Pet. & Min. A	0.0055	0 0055	0 0055	.0055	3,000,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. B	0.0055	0.0055	0.0055	.0055	2,000,000
The Philodrill Corp. A	0.28	0.28	0.28	.28	200,000
The Philodrill Corp. B	0.21	0.21	0.21	.21	20,000

	SHARES	VALUE (P)
Bank & Fin Svc...	...2,476,950...	...66,675,600.00
Comm'l & Ind'l...	.55,777,940...	.390,949,680 00
PRO..	..24,925,000...	..115,490,100 00
Mining...	132,781,300...	..7,421,100 00
OIL..............	....5,220,000...	.........87,700.00
GRAND TOTALS:	...221,181,190...	.580,624,180 00
AVERAGES		
Bank & Fin Svc...	... 557 52...	...DOWN 3.89
Comm'l & Ind'l...	..2,945.44...	..DOWN 16.80
PRO..	..... 685 08...	...DOWN 2 20
Mining...	...2,408.80...	...DOWN 4.84
OIL..............	... .2.15...	...DOWN 0.11
All Shares Index..	..1,144.44...	...DOWN 5 59
Composite	.. 1,860.50..	...DOWN 11.58

NO. OF ADVANCES: 17; NO. OF DECLINES: 40; NO. OF UNCHANGED: 52; NO. OF TRADED ISSUES: 109; NO. OF TRADES: 1,616

DISCLOSURES

FIL-HISPANO Holdings Corp. will hold an investors' briefing on May 27 at the Makati Sports Club, L.P. Leviste St., Salcedo Vill., Makati City. The briefing will begin at approximately 3 p.m. immediately after its annual stockholders' meeting.

* * *

PETROENERGY Resources Corp.'s chairman/ director Delfin L. Lazaro purchased a total of 570,000 company shares on May 19, 20 and 23, through BPI Securities Corp.

* * *

PCI Leasing and Finance Inc.'s board approved June 10 as the record date for its annual stockholders meeting.

* * *

BASIC Consolidated, Inc. and MG Mining & Energy Corp. signed a memorandum of agreement dated April 29, 2005, to study and negotiate possible mining projects subject of a future joint venture agreement.

* * *

ELECTED directors of **Alsons Consolidated Resources Inc**. were Tomas I. Alcantara, Editha I. Alcantara, Carlos G. Dominguez, Honorio A. Poblador III, Tirso G. Santillan Jr., Ramon T. Diokno, Leandro D. Javier, Paulino G. Garcia Jr., Jose Ben R. Laraya, Bienvenido A. Tan III and Jacinto C. Gavino.

* * *

ELECTED directors of the **Philippine National Construction Corp.** were Noel Eli B. Kintanar, Roy Eduardo T. Lucero and Jose R. Simeon. The board also approved the designation of Jose Vicente C. Bengzon III as PNCC director ex-officio, to represent the interest of the privatization and management office. ***Compiled by: Erika A. Sarmiento, PDI Research***

Imports still declining; March shipments down 4%

By Michelle V. Remo

THE COUNTRY'S imports shrank by 4 percent to $3.44 billion in March as shipment of electronics declined by 13.1 percent to $1.41 billion. It was the fourth consecutive month of decline for Philippine imports.

The National Statistics Office said this brought total imports for the first quarter of the year to $18.92 billion, or nearly the same as the year-ago figure.

Accounting for 41.1 percent of the total import bill for March, electronic imports are composed of inputs for electronic items, the country's top export product.

"The drop in imports, if caused by a decrease in the importation of input materials, would suggest that the country would not be exporting as much in the next few months," said Jose Leo Lemuel Caparas Jr., senior economist at the University of Asia and the Pacific. He explained that a drop in electronic shipment could indicate that exporters were expecting a decline in sales, and therefore reducing their import requirements.

But while imports dropped in the first three months, the country's balance of trade still hit a surplus of $122 million, a reversal of the trade deficit of $559 million in the same period last year.

Mineral fuel, lubricants and related materials were the second biggest import items, growing by 17.2 percent to $475.5 million from the previous year's $405.7 million.

The third top import was iron and steel at $159.27 million, or 18 percent higher than last year's $134.98 million. Industrial machinery and equipment, meanwhile, accounted for $142.49 million of total imports, or 13 percent lower than last year's.

Other major imports in March were transport equipment, $114.97 million; cereals and cereal preparations, $89.02 million; textile yarn, fabrics, made-up articles and related products, $77.91 million; organic and inorganic chemical, $77.78 million; plastics in primary and non-primary forms, $72.4 million; and telecommunication equipment and electrical machinery, $69.26 million.

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Gov't urged to review perks granted to GSII

By Ronnel W. Domingo

A GROUP of local downstream steel industry firms yesterday urged the government to review the tax and tariff perks granted to Global Steelworks International Inc. following reports that it did not declare certain shipments of its raw material imports.

The government, through the Department of Trade and Industry's investment incentives programs, granted the former National Steel Corp. tax holidays and other financial and non-financial perks.

In October 2004, Malacañang issued Executive Order No. 375 which provided that tariffs on imported hot-rolled coils and cold-rolled coils—the main raw materials for many steel products—would be raised to 7 percent from 3 percent when GSII started commercial operation.

Salvio D. Perez, president of the Filipino Galvanizers Institute, said in a press briefing that the group welcomed and was supportive of the operation of GSII but that the latter should be able to turn out products that would pass current international quality standards to deserve such support from the government.

GSII acquired the former NSC last year and launched an extensive rehabilitation program at the Iligan plant. GSII is a subsidiary of Global Infrastructure Holding Ltd., one of the world's leading steel manufacturers.

Perez said the galvanizers were concerned that while enjoying incentives for its business, GSII was turning out low quality products while prices for other supply sources were bound to go up.

"There is no doubt that the downstream steel industry would support GSII, but only when it is capable of supplying the right quality of materials," Perez said.

"Unless GSII upgrades its machinery that are three-decade old, it can never claim to have achieved commercial operation," he added.

Perez said further that the tariff protection for GSII might not serve its intended purpose and might only result in price increases for galvanized roofing and tin cans.

Jesus Arranza, president of the Federation of Philippine Industries, said that a recent Bureau of Customs report that alleged that GSII was violating Customs rules should be sufficient ground for the government to reconsider the incentives granted to the firm.

Arranza said GSII was under close watch for alleged undeclared importation of a total of at least 47.4 metric tons of steel products and raw materials.

In a memorandum to Customs Commissioner Alberto Lina dated last April 28, Deputy Commissioner Celso P. Templo recommended a complete audit of raw materials brought into the warehouse of GSII, and of the products sold to the local and foreign markets.

Templo said he had already instructed GSII to make available to Customs representatives all import and export documents as well as papers covering the sale of scrap in the local market.

Templo also said GSII was found selling scrap material to a local company without a required clearance from the Bureau of Customs.

In a statement, GSII president Sushant C. Das said all of the firm's imports "are supported with invoices, bills of lading, packing lists, certificates of origin, shipping documents and other documentation.

"We are in constant touch with Customs authorities, and all our import documents like filing of entries etc. are being sent regularly to (them)," Das said.

WORK AS USUAL
Filipino workers, oblivious of ongoing protests against the newly approved value-added tax law, go on with their work, painting the walls of a hotel in Manila, on Tuesday. President Macapagal-Arroyo signed that day an amended value-added tax law, the biggest revenue-raising measure meant to plug the government's yawning budget gap. Filipino protesters assailed the Arroyo administration allegedly for deceiving the people and for being insensitive to the plight of the Filipinos, especially the poor, by raising the taxes of goods and services. AP

DOTC seeks dialogue with JBIC exec

By Clarissa S. Batino

TRANSPORT Secretary Leandro Mendoza said the agency would put on hold an earlier plan to lodge a formal protest against the country representative of the Japan Bank for International Cooperation in the Philippines.

The Department of Transportation and Communication said a week ago that it would file a formal protest against JBIC country representative Osamu Murata with the Japanese Embassy in Manila and at the JBIC headquarters in Tokyo, Japan, "for his inappropriate behavior."

But the transport chief said Monday he would first hold a dialogue with Murata before resorting to any drastic action.

The JBIC is the country's largest soft loan creditor and donor. It finances about 60 percent of foreign-assisted projects in the Philippines.

The transportation department accused Murata of "belligerent behavior" and complicity with irregularities related to the P31.5-billion Line 2 project of the Light Rail Transit Authority, which is now under a congressional investigation.

Transport Assistant Secretary Roberto Castañares, who wrote a strongly worded letter to Murata on May 11, later denied having accused the JBIC chief of any irregularity. He also denied saying he wanted Murata declared persona non grata. He said he also did not seek for Murata's replacement.

"While we complain of his harsh treatment of DOTC, we would rather solve the matter in a professional manner," said Castañares in a letter to the INQUIRER, reacting to a May 18 story, which was attributed to him.

In that letter, Castañares asked Murata about "a grand conspiracy to cover up irregularities, his deafening silence and apparent tolerance on irregularities committed by Japanese contractors."

He also criticized Murata for "shouting at and scolding" Transport Undersecretary Guiling Mamondiong "for not endorsing the capex (LRT Line 1 P11-billion capacity expansion) project."

Mamondiong denied having been scolded by Murata. He clarified that he and the JBIC chief had "a heated argument."

"This happened sometime in March when Mr. Murata, at the top of his voice, called from Japan, waking up Mamondiong who answered his call and then accused him of delaying the implementation of the project," said a letter of the transport undersecretary to the INQUIRER.

Mamondiong said he became upset and also "raised (his) voice to stress (his) point" with Murata.

Marubeni joining Maynilad bidding

From page B1

Corp. of Japan.

"DMCI has received offers from local and foreign groups to form the consortium, but we could not act on these proposals unless the due diligence on Maynilad starts," a source told the INQUIRER.

Another source added that DMCI has tapped investment bank Macquarie Group as its financial adviser in its bid to acquire Maynilad.

The ING Barings-Ayala consortium has sought the permission of government regulator Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System (MWSS) and other bank creditors to conduct its own due diligence on the west concessionaire.

Maynilad president Fiorello Estuar confirmed to the INQUIRER yesterday that they received last Tuesday the formal letter from consortium member Manila Water informing them of its intent.

The due diligence on Maynilad could not be done by interested buyers as the rehabilitation court—the Quezon City Regional Trial Court Branch 90—had asked for more time to study the latest rehabilitation plan of Maynilad as approved by creditors in April.

The creditors of Maynilad have accepted the final revisions to the rehabilitation plan.

BCDA-CJHDevco row worsens

THE BASES Conversion and Development Authority (BCDA) said the Fil-Estate group-led Camp John Hay Development Corp. (CJHDevco) should settle some P1.2 billion in debt before further talks on the latter's remaining arrears can take place.

BCDA said it had twice accommodated CJHDevco's requests for dialogues over its ballooning arrears. These were in July 2000 and July 2003, during which the government acceded to the developer's pleas for concessions concerning its swelling debt.

BCDA said "the government has bent backward twice to accommodate the beleaguered company's requests for the rescheduling of its debt; it is now time for the developer to stand by its word and deliver its commitments."

CJHDevco, for its part, said that BCDA's claim that the developer had not been paying lease rentals for Camp John Hay since 1998 was a blatant lie.

"Since the start of development, CJHDevco has already paid more than P900 million to BCDA and that, as a result of the restructured terms of lease, the developer was in good standing in 2003 before the Supreme Court decision came out," said the CJHDevco senior vice president for legal and corporate services.

"We have evidence to prove that it was not the developer but the government that was remiss in its contractual obligations since 1996," Alvarez said.

In January 1997, the developer called the attention of the BCDA over its failure to deliver 32 hectares of the leased area, the development project's environmental compliance certificate, the protracted demolition of structures by the BCDA and JHMC, and the implementing rules and regulations on procedures for importation.

These material shortcomings, the company said, caused delays in the development of the property.

"Yet in October 1997, another payment (on top of the P250 million in advance payment) was made by CJHDevco amounting to P425 million despite delays in the issuance of the ECC," the company said in a statement. This, it added, was followed by another P50 million and P75 million payment in cash and property on July 2000. Upon the signing of a restructuring agreement, CJHDevco paid the BCDA another P50 million in cash on July 18, 2003 and another P50 million was paid in October 2003 in accordance with the restructuring agreement.

In October 2003, when the Supreme Court nullified the tax and duty exemptions of Camp John Hay, Clark and Poro Point, CJHDevco suspended lease rental payments to the BCDA pending the issuance of a government warranty that would shield Camp John Hay from adverse effects of the court decision.

In the meantime, BCDA subsidiary John Hay Management Corp. spokesperson Lyssa Pagano-Calde said the government had agreed to reschedule CJHDevco's debt in 2000 which already amounted to some P425 million at that time.

SEC dissolves Pacific Plans

From page B1

On Feb. 15, the SEC gave LPI 15 days within which to comply with this requirement after LPI asked for an extension. The pre-need firm sought another extension of 30 days when this deadline lapsed.

In a letter to the SEC last April 13, LPI requested another 30 days to comply and the SEC noted that the period expired without LPI submitting the required documents.

On May 20, the SEC told LPI to submit the requirements within 48 hours. On May 23, the SEC said LPI's special audit report, "upon examination, were found insufficient."

Lukban said the SEC gave LPI seven months to comply with requirements to establish itself as a corporation.

A pre-need firm needs at least P100 million in capital under existing SEC rules.

"We allowed them conditionally to be registered. We didn't want to disrupt its operations then since it had existing plan holders," Lukban said.

PPI said the SEC's order to revoke LPI's incorporation might cast doubt on PPI's rehabilitation.

"The additional payments to the plan holders were made voluntarily by PPI and in the context of rehabilitation of the company. Hence, because it has no other recourse, PPI is withholding payment to plan holders until issues brought about by the SEC order are cleared and resolved," PPI said in a statement.

Total funds being made available amount to P591 million, with P250 million coming from the Yuchengco group of companies' head Alfonso Yuchengco and P341 million from PPI.

If the rehabilitation plan is approved by the court, PPI is also initially providing a liquidity window of another P300 million to its traditional plan holders.

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technical sessions

Seminar Room A (Seminar Fee of Php 200 for all technical sessions. 150 pax maximum capacity)

TIME	TOPICS/SPEAKER
JUNE 22, 2005 1:00 PM-3:00 PM	"Waste Water Treatment: WTF Design Operation and Maintenance Biological Treatment" *Mr. Dads Pineda*
4:00 PM-6:00 PM	"Total Productive Maintenance" *Engr. Richard Estuesta, Unilever Phils./PSME*
JUNE 23, 2005 10:00 AM-12:00 PM	"Engineer's Report: Preparation for Air Pollution Source Installation" *Emiliano Kempis, DENR*
1:00 PM-3:00 PM	"Autogas –Alternative LPG fuel for cars by VALERIE" *Mr. Gama Javier/ Mr.Angel Martinez/ Mr. Edward Jose*
4:00 PM-6:00 PM	"Renewable Energy –Wind Turbine" *Mr. Audi Santibañez*
JUNE 24, 2005 10:00 AM-12:00 NN	Common Rail Direct Injection, Diesel EngineTech" *Toyota Philippines*

product presentations

Seminar Room B (Free admission. On a first-come, first-served basis. 150 pax maximum capacity)

TIME	TOPICS/SPEAKER
JUNE 22, 2005 1:00 PM-3:00 PM	How Variable Speed Drive Save Energy In Pumping System *Grundfos Pumps*
4:00 PM-6:00 PM	Nirvana Oil-free Variable Speed Drive Screw Compressor: Large Reciprocating Compressor *Ingersoll-Rand*
JUNE 23, 2005 10:30 AM-12:30 PM	Product Presentation of GNQ Industrial and Contracting Corp.
1:30 PM-3:30 PM	How Boiler Comply With The Clean Air Act *Engr. Labucay, Tongco, Tejada and Mallilin (Cimech)*
4:00 PM-6:00 PM	Cost Effectiveness of Bag Filtration *Simpsons Phils, Inc.*
JUNE 24, 2005 10:30 AM-12:30 PM	Product Presentation of Edward Keller Phils.
1:30 PM-3:30 PM	Product Presentation of Enertech Systems Industries Inc.

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INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID FOR TRUCKING/HAULING SERVICES

The NATIONAL FOOD AUTHORITY (NFA) invites all interested Trucking/Hauling Operators to apply for eligibility and to bid for the supply of Trucking/Hauling Services for more or less 39,950 MT or 799,000 bags Imported Rice covering the following specific routes:

A. From Poro Point to staging Warehouse within La Union

Receiving Warehouses	Volume (bags)	Trucking Reqmt. (No.)	Load/ Capacity Reqmt.	Approved Budget for the Contract
Poro Port Whse. (Imaginary)/ San Juan GID/Aringay Whse./ Caragay Whse./ Agoo Whse/Obar Whse.	400,000	30	12,000	2,800,000.00

B. From La Union Staging Warehouses to the different warehouses within Region I:

Prov.	Lot No.	Receiving Whse.	DIK	Volume (bags)	Trucking Reqmt. (No.)	Load / Capacity Reqmt.	Approved Budget for the Contract
Abra	1	Pidigan Whse.	131.6	5,000	2	800	73,050.00
Benguet	2	La Union-Binalonan	82.0	70,000	7	2,800	671,300.00
	3	Binalonan - Baguio	72.0	70,000	10	3,000	1,225,000.00
I. Norte	4	Laoag GID	214.0	12,000	3	1,200	259,320.00
	5	Dingras Whse.	242.0	10,000	3	1,200	244,400.00
I. Sur	6	Tagudin FLGC	44.3	10,000	2	1,200	56,900.00
	7	Singson Whse.	71.0	6,000	2	800	49,860.00
	8	Chua Whse.	60.5	6,000	2	800	42,480.00
	9	Sta. Maria Whse.	91.7	5,000	2	800	53,650.00
	10	Bantay GID	130.5	7,000	2	800	101,430.00
	11	Tan Whse.	156.5	7,000	2	800	112,840.00
E. Pang.	12	Rosales Whse. I	110.0	50,000	5	2,000	610,500.00
	13	Binalonan Triplex	82.0	40,000	5	2,000	383,600.00
	14	Binalonan DM	82.0	17,000	3	1,200	163,030.00
W. Pang.	15	AlaminosGID	132.0	19,000	3	1,200	278,350.00
	16	Kazenbar IV	85.0	49,000	5	2,000	488,530.00
	17	Mangatarem	118.0	8,000	2	800	104,800.00
	18	Ferrer II	107.2	8,000	2	800	95,200.00
SUB-TOTAL				399,000			5,014,240.00
GRAND TOTAL				799,000			7,814,240.00

Trucks/units of prospective bidders must be classified as "Trucks-for-Hire". Trucking/Hauling Operators may bid in any or all specified/preferred destinations.

The Schedule of Bidding activities as follows:

Activities	Date
1. Issuance of Application and List of Eligibility Requirements, Bidding Documents	May 26-June 8, 2005 (8:00 AM-5:00 PM)
2. Pre-Bidding Conference	June 9, 2005 (3:00 PM)
3. Deadline of Submission of Eligibility Requirements and Bid Proposals (Opening of Bids will follow immediately)	June 21, 2005 (3:00 PM)

The application forms, eligibility requirements and other bid documents shall be obtained from the RBAC Secretariat after payment of a non-refundable bidding fee in the amount of P2,500.00

The pre-bid conference and bidding proper shall be conducted at the NFA Conference Room, 2nd Floor, NFA Office Building, San Juan, La Union. All Trucking/Hauling Operators interested to participate in the bidding must be registered/accredited with NFA. Interested bidders who are not NFA-accredited Trucking/Hauling Operators and/or whose registration had already expired may still participate provided they shall apply for accreditation/renewal at NFA Region I not later than June 3, 2005

The eligibility of prospective bidders shall be determined using simple "Pass/Fail criteria and shall be considered as either "eligible" or "ineligible". If the prospective bidder is rated "Passed" for all the requirements, he shall be considered "eligible". If the prospective bidder is rated "Failed" in any one of the requirements, he shall be considered ineligible.

A single stage bidding will be adopted using a simple pass/fail criteria for the evaluation. The prospective bidders shall submit simultaneously two (2) envelopes, Envelope A containing the eligibility requirements and Envelope B containing bidding documents. Contents of each of the bid envelopes are specified in the Instructions to Bidders.

Eligibility criteria includes among others that the value of the prospective bidders largest contract within the last three (3) years, adjusted to current prices, completed within the period and similar to the contract to be bid must be at least fifty percent (50%) of the approved budget for the contract to be bid.

THE NFA RESERVES THE RIGHT TO ACCEPT OR REJECT ANY OR ALL BIDS, TO WAIVE ANY FORMALITIES OR DEFECTS FOUND THEREIN OR TO ACCEPT SUCH BIDS OR TO AWARD TO ANY CONTRACTOR WHOSE BID IS CONSIDERED MOST ADVANTAGEOUS TO THE NFA AND /OR TO THE GOVERNMENT.

For further inquiries, please contact the RBAC Chairman Ruben S. Rimando or RBAC Secretariat c/o Ms. Gloria Daclan at the Regional Office 01, San Juan, La Union or at Tel. Nos. (072) 242-59-09 or (072) 700-25-79.

(Sgd.) **RUBEN S. RIMANDO, CESO VI**
Asst. Regional Director &
RBAC Chairman

(PDI – May 26 & June 2, 2005)

REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES
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Office of the Cebu Provincial Governor
Cebu Capitol, Cebu City

NOTICE FOR EXTENSION OF DEADLINE

Notice is hereby given that due to numerous requests, the deadline for the submission of LETTER OF INTENT and other required pre-qualification documents from proponents for the commercial development, thru a Build Transfer Operate (BTO) scheme, of a property owned by the Cebu Provincial Government has been extended to June 30, 2005. Property details and development terms are as follows:

> Lot No. 3-A-2 and a portion of Lot No. 3-A-1-B, containing a total area of 27,351 square meters, more or less, located in Banilad, Cebu City, previously occupied by the Cebu International School and Cebu Tennis Club.

TERMS AND CONDITIONS:

a. Rental rate of at least P35.00/sq.m./month with an escalation rate of 5% per year, applicable on the sixth year of lease and every year thereafter;
b. Sales percentage share of 1/2 of 1% of gross sales or P200,000.00, whichever is higher, paid monthly to the Province of Cebu;
c. Investment cost for site development and structure construction not less than P250M, with building and site development plan subject to approval by the Economic Enterprise Council. Built up facility to be turned over upon completion to the Province of Cebu and to be fully Insured with the Government Service Insurance System (GSIS) in accordance with the appraisal of GSIS, in favor of Cebu Province. Premium shall be paid by the proponent;
d. Operation of facility and use of the property shall be for a maximum of twenty-five (25) years.

For ready reference and guidance, copies of the titles, technical descriptions and sketch plan of the said lot are available, for a fee of P5,000.00 at the EEC Secretariat, Office of the Provincial Planning and Development Coordinator, 3rd Floor, Cebu Capitol, Cebu City. Notice of Bidding shall be issued to qualified proponents.

(Sgd.) **GWENDOLYN F. GARCIA**
Cebu Provincial Governor

(PDI - May 26 & June 2, 2005)

Republic of the Philippines
ZAMBOANGA CITY SPECIAL ECONOMIC ZONE AUTHORITY
San Ramon, Zamboanga City

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

WASTEWATER TREATMENT FACILITY AND COLLECTION SYSTEM FOR THE ZAMBOANGA CITY SPECIAL ECONOMIC ZONE AUTHORITY [DESIGN AND BUILD SCHEME]

Modular Construction of Initial Facility at 300 cu m./day

Design Criteria ---

Influent	BOD5	450 ppm maximum
	Oils & Grease	20 ppm
	Suspended Solids	400 ppm maximum

The Zamboanga City Special Economic Zone Authority (ZCSEZA) will require the design and construction of a wastewater treatment facility with a collection system using the existing drainage system with an independent add-on wastewater collection system for its First Industrial Park. The Industrial Park is located at Barangay San Ramon, Zamboanga City. The water treatment facility will need to comply with current effluent standards and should demonstrate flexibility in complying with future effluent standards based on the Philippine Clean Water Act. A modular system with the ability to adapt to the increasing hydraulic load of the industrial park is required. The ZCSEZA will enforce waste acceptance criteria for the facility which will ensure the quality of wastewater to be treated by the facility. The required wastewater treatment plan must demonstrate proven technology, consistency in performance and flexibility in adapting to more stringent effluent standards.

1. The Zamboanga City Special Economic Zone Authority (ZCSEZA), through the Corporate Operating Budget 2005 intends to apply the sum of **FIFTEEN MILLION SIX HUNDRED THOUSAND PESOS (P15,600,000.00)** being the Approved Budget for Contract (ABC) to payments under the contract for **"Wastewater Treatment Facility and Collection System for the Zamboanga City Special Economic Zone Authority [Design and Build Scheme]"**. Bids received in excess of the ABC shall be automatically rejected at Bid opening.
2. The ZCSEZA now invites potential Bidders to apply for eligibity for **"Wastewater Treatment Facility and Collection System for the Zamboanga City Special Economic Zone Authority [Design and Build Scheme]"**. Bidders should possess a valid PCAB license applicable to the above type and cost of the contract, have completed a similar contract with a value of at least 50% of the ABC, and meet the other minimum eligibility requirements stated in the eligibility forms. Applications for eligibity will be evaluated on a "pass/fail" basis. The deadline for submission of eligibility documents shall be on or before June 13, 2005. Only those Bidders passing the eligibility check will be entitled to purchase the Bidding Documents.
3. Bidding will be conducted through open competitive bidding procedures as specified in the Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR) of Republic Act No. 9184 (R.A. 9184), otherwise known as the Government Procurement Reform Act, and is restricted unless otherwise stated to organizations with at least seventy-five percent (75%) interest or outstanding capital stock belonging to citizens of the Philippines. In accordance with IRR Part A of R.A. 9184, only bids from Bidders who pass an eligibility check will be opened. The Bidder with the Lowest Calculated Bid (LCB) shall advance to the post-qualification stage in order to finally determine its responsiveness to the technical and financial requirements of the project. The contract shall then be awarded to the Lowest Calculated Responsive Bidder (LCRB) who was determined as such during post-qualification.
4. Interested Bidders shall secure the Eligibility documents, upon their submission of a Letter of Intent (LOI Form available at the address given below), from the BAC Secretariat at the address stated below on or before June 06, 2005. They shall submit the accomplished Eligibility documents, in order for these to be received by the BAC Secretariat in the same address, on or before June 13, 2005.
5. Interested eligible Bidders may obtain further information from ZCSEZA and inspect the Bidding Documents at the address given below from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. from June 20 to 27, 2005
6. A complete set of Bidding Documents may be purchased by Bidders that passed the eligibility check upon the presentation of the Notice of Eligibility to the BAC Secretariat, at the address below and upon payment of a nonrefundable fee of **Two Thousand Five Hundred Pesos (P2,500.00)** The Bidding Documents shall be received personally by the bidder or his authorized representative from June 20 to 27, 2005.
7. The ZCSEZA will hold a Pre-Bid Conference open to all Eligible Bidders on July 18, 2005 at 9:00 a.m at the Conference Hall, Ground Floor Administration Building, San Ramon, Zamboanga City.
8. Eligible Bidders must submit their Bids at the address below at or before **August 01, 2005 at 10:00 a.m.** All Bids must be accompanied by a Bid Security in the form of **Cash, Certified Check, Cashier's Check, or Manager's Check** and in an amount of One Hundred Fifty Six Thousand Pesos (P156,000.00). Late Bids shall not be accepted. Bid opening shall be on **August 01, 2005 at 10:00 a.m.** at the Conference Hall, Ground Floor Administration Building, San Ramon, Zamboanga City. Bids will be opened in the presence of the Bidders' representatives who choose to attend at the address below at **August 01, 2005 at 10:00 a.m.**
9. The ZCSEZA reserves the right to accept or reject any Bid, and to annul the bidding process and reject all Bids at any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected Bidder or Bidders.

(Sgd.) **GEORGINA PANTALEON-YU**
Chairman and Administrator
Zamboanga City Special Economic Zone Authority
Administration Building, San Ramon, Zamboanga City

(PDI - May 19 & 26, 2005)

Republic of the Philippines
NATIONAL FOOD AUTHORITY
Region 01
San Juan, La Union

Tel. No.: (072)242-59-09 & (072)700-25-79
Web site:www.nfa.gov.ph
E-mail Address:nfa-region1@sflu.com
Fax No.: (072) 242-59-07 & (072) 242-59-08

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID FOR HANDLING SERVICES

The NATIONAL FOOD AUTHORITY (NFA) invites all interested Handling Services Contractors to apply for eligibility and to bid for the Handling Services of NFA imported rice at the different NFA/Leased Warehouses in Region I, to wit:

Province/Destination/Warehouses	Approved Volume (in bags of 50 kg) for Transfer within the Region	Approved Budget for the Contract (Rate per bag of 50 kg (P) x Total Volume
1. NFA GID Warehouse, San Juan/ Staging Warehouse, La Union	729,000	P 2,187,000.00
2. NFA Loakan/NFA Kadiwa Warehouse, Baguio City	70,000	210,000.00
- La Union to Binalonan Triplex	70,000	210,000.00
- Binalonan Triplex to Loakan GID/Kadiwa Whse.	70,000	210,000.00
3. NFA GID Warehouse, Abra	5,000	15,000.00
4. NFA GID Warehouse, Laoag City, Ilocos Norte	22,000	66,000.00
5. NFA GID Warehouse, Bantay, Ilocos Sur	41,000	123,000.00
6. NFA GID Warehouse, Binalonan/ NFA Rosales Warehouse, Rosales, Pangasinan	107,000	321,000.00
7. NFA GID Alaminos/, NFA GID Warehouse, Mangatarem, Pangasinan	84,000	252,000.00
TOTAL	1,198,000	P 3,594,000.00

Interested Handling Contractors may bid on any or all warehouse-destinations.

The Schedule of Bidding activities are as follows:

Activities	Date/Time
1. Issuance of Application and List of Eligibility Requirements, Bidding Documents	May 26-June 8, 2005 (8:00 AM-5:00 PM)
2. Pre-Bidding Conference	June 9, 2005 (1:00 PM)
3. Deadline for the Submission of Eligibility Requirements and Bid Proposals (Opening of Bids will follow immediately)	June 21, 2005 (1:00 PM)

The application forms, eligibility requirements and other bid documents shall be obtained from the RBAC Secretariat after payment of a non-refundable bidding fee in the amount of P1,500.00.

A single stage bidding will be adopted using a simple pass/fail criteria for the evaluation. The prospective bidders shall submit simultaneously two (2) envelopes, Envelop A containing the eligibility requirements and Envelope B containing bidding documents. Contents of each of the bid envelopes are specified in the Instructions to Bidders.

Eligibility criteria includes among others that the value of the prospective bidders largest contract within the last three (3) years, adjusted to current prices, completed within the period and similar to the contract to be bid must be at least fifty percent (50%) of the approved budget for the contract to be bid.

THE NFA RESERVES THE RIGHT TO ACCEPT OR REJECT ANY OR ALL BIDS, TO WAIVE ANY FORMALITIES OR DEFECTS FOUND THEREIN OR TO ACCEPT SUCH BIDS OR TO AWARD TO ANY CONTRACTOR WHOSE BID IS CONSIDERED MOST ADVANTAGEOUS TO THE NFA AND /OR TO THE GOVERNMENT.

For further inquiries, please contact the RBAC Chairman Ruben S. Rimando or RBAC Secretariat c/o Ms. Gloria Daclan at the Regional Office 01, San Juan, La Union at Tel. Nos. (072) 242-59-09 or (072) 700-25-79.

(Sgd.) **RUBEN S. RIMANDO, CESO VI**
Assistant Regional Manager &
RBAC Chairman

(PDI – May 26 & June 2, 2005)

Republic of the Philippines
NATIONAL FOOD AUTHORITY
Region 01
San Juan, La Union

Tel. No.: (072)242-59-09 & (072)700-25-79
Web site:www.nfa.gov.ph
E-mail Address:nfa-region1@sflu.com
Fax No.: (072) 242-59-07 & (072) 242-59-08

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID FOR ARRASTRE AND STEVEDORING SERVICES FOR NFA REGION 01

The National Food Authority, NFA Regional Office 01, San Juan, La Union invites qualified Cargo Handling Services Contractors to apply for eligibility and to bid for the provision of Arrastre and Stevedoring Services in the discharging of more or less 20,000 MT or 400,000 bags rice imports at Poro Port, San Fernando City with an Approved Budget for the Contract of P 3,455,200.00.

The Schedule of Bidding activities are as follows:

Activities	Date
1. Issuance of Application and List of Eligibility Requirements, Bidding Documents	May 26-June 8, 2005 (8:00 AM-5:00 PM)
2. Pre-Bidding Conference	June 9, 2005 (10:00 AM)
3. Deadline for the Submission of Eligibility Requirements and Bid Proposals (Opening of Bids will follow immediately)	June 21, 2005 (10:00 AM)

The application forms, eligibility requirements and other bid documents shall be obtained from the RBAC Secretariat after payment of a non-refundable bidding fee in the amount of P2,500.00.

The pre-bid conference and bidding proper shall be conducted at the NFA Conference Room, 2nd Floor, NFA Office Building, San Juan, La Union.

The eligibility of prospective bidders shall be determined using simple "Pass/Fail criteria and shall be considered as either "eligible" or "ineligible". If the prospective bidder is rated "Passed" for all the requirements, he shall be considered "eligible". If the prospective bidder is rated "Failed" in any one of the requirements, he shall be considered ineligible.

A single stage bidding will be adopted using a simple pass/fail criteria for the evaluation. The prospective bidders shall submit simultaneously two (2) envelopes, Envelope A containing the eligibility requirements and Envelope B containing bidding documents. Contents of each of the bid envelopes are specified in the Instructions to Bidders.

Eligibility criteria includes among others that the value of the prospective bidders largest contract within the last three (3) years, adjusted to current prices, completed within the period and similar to the contract to be bid must be at least fifty percent (50%) of the approved budget for the contract to be bid.

THE NFA RESERVES THE RIGHT TO ACCEPT OR REJECT ANY OR ALL BIDS, TO WAIVE ANY FORMALITIES OR DEFECTS FOUND THEREIN OR TO ACCEPT SUCH BIDS OR TO AWARD TO ANY CONTRACTOR WHOSE BID IS CONSIDERED MOST ADVANTAGEOUS TO THE NFA AND /OR TO THE GOVERNMENT.

For further inquiries, please contact the RBAC Chairman Ruben S. Rimando or RBAC Secretariat c/o Ms. Gloria Daclan at the Regional Office 01, San Juan, La Union at Tel. Nos. (072) 242-59-09 or (072) 700-25-79.

(Sgd.) **RUBEN S. RIMANDO, CESO VI**
Assistant Regional Manager & RBAC Chairman

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1.5% Car Loan 5344441

1.5% Easy Car Loan 4112547/48

1.5% Easy Car Loan 3748765

1.5% Easy Carloan 7815352/55

1.5% Fast Car Loan 6560140

1.5% w/oTaking Car 7228942-43

1.5% w/oTaking Car 3650974/75

2% w/o taking car 7880183-84

2% w/o Taking Car 7262780

2% w/oTaking Car 7221021

2% w/oTaking Car 8870490/95

2% w/oTaking Car 8959454

2% w/oTaking Car 8966630/33

2% w/oTaking Car 3732081/02

2% w/out taking car 6567685

2% w/out taking car 5315577

ERRATUM

In the ad of the **Social Security System** published in this newspaper last Saturday, May 21, 2005, the SSS Number of SSS Member **Reynaldo T. Bungay** should have been **SS#03-2738657-5.**

Our Apologies.

Manila Memorial Park
Leading the Way
SUCAT
HOLY CROSS
DASMARIÑAS
CEBU
DAVAO
(632) 815-1875 or 90
(632) 893-6374 to 77
BULACAN

OBITUARIES

THE HERITAGE PARK
FORT BONIFACIO
Funeral Home and Crematory
845-2334 to 38; 845-2440

Our Beloved Darling

JESUS "JESS" L. BANGUIS

Journalist, Writer

Peacefully joined our Creator
on May 24, 2005.

His bereaved children **Jess Jr.** and **Tita, Catch** and **Ceny Catchillar, Fatima** (†) and **Tito** (†) **Bernardo, Joselito** and **Chit Cabrera**; grandchildren and great grandchildren; brother **Tom** and sister-in-law **Pelang**; relatives and friends, request the pious readers to say a prayer that eternal rest be granted him, let perpetual light shine upon him, may his soul rest in peace.

His remains lie in state at the Don Bosco Chapel Faith on Arnaiz St., Makati City.

Interment at Manila South Cemetery will be announced later.

DR. DIOSCORIO E. ABJELINA

ROSARIO, BATANGAS

December 14, 1931 – May 24, 2005

Now peacefully rests in the Grace and Goodness of our Lord...

[Married to **FLORDELIZA T. ABJELINA** (†)]

He is survived by his loving children and grandchildren:

Dr. NOREEN & Dr. JOJO PASCUAL : Vin, Deden, Tricia
BOY & Dr. CECILO ABJELINA : Deannielle, Mito, Anton
Dr. KENNETH & Dr. ANGIE ABJELINA : Kyle, Kobe
JEANNETH & JUN BRIONES : Lizzie

His remains lie in state at their residence at Kumintang Ibaba, Batangas City.

Interment will be at Eternal Garden, Batangas City on Tuesday, May 31, 2005 after the 3:00 p.m. Mass at St. Mary Euphrasia.

The family is requesting for your prayers for the eternal repose of his soul.

"I am ready to sacrifice my life for your Law
that is always in my heart. Though the wicked have laid
a snare for me, I do not stray from your precepts.
Your statutes are my heritage forever, they are the joy
at my heart.
From age to age I am determined to fulfill
your decress until the end."

My father

Papal Knight Commander

Hilarion "Larry" C. Tolentino

*Joined my mother **Edita** (†) peacefully*
last Monday morning May 23, 2005.

I would like to request relatives, friends, and the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at the Charity Chapel, Don Bosco, Arnaiz Road, Makati City.

Interment today, Thursday, May 26, 2005 at the Heritage Park, Fort Bonifacio, Makati City after the 8:30 a.m. Mass at Don Bosco Main Church.

His only Daughter **Mary Anne.**

"Do not let your hearts be troubled. Trust in God, trust also in Me. In My Father's house are many rooms... I am going there to prepare a place for you."

John 14:1-2

"And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall be any more pain, for the former things are passed away."

ROSARIO "CHARITO" F. NELLE

Loving wife, mother, grandmother,
great-grandmother, aunt & friend

Passed away in the Peace of our Lord on
May 23, 2005 at the age of 88.

We, her family, husband **Jim** (†); children, their spouses, **Dotty** (†) **& Tito Camus, Ginny & Allen Lundy, Carol & Ronnie Cacas, Ell & Ray White,** and **Jimmy & Zoe**; daughter **Betty**; grandchildren, **Liza, Albert** (†) **& Marty, Tina & Monchu, John & Bambi, Bubi & Steph; Andrea & Dondi, Caran, Michelle & Wyndon; Jodel & Dante; Yvette & Buddy, Heather & JP, Tooney;** and **Chesca**; great grandchildren, relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of her soul.

Her cremated ashes will be at the St. James Lower Chapel in Ayala Alabang on May 25-27 from 6:00 - 7:00 p.m. for the Novena Masses.

A Funeral Mass will be held on Saturday, May 28, 2005 at 10:00 a.m. at the Capilla de la Virgen, Santuario de San Antonio, Forbes Park, Makati. Interment to follow immediately after.

"Death is not extinguishing the light,
it is simply putting off the lamp,
because the dawn has come."

ROMULO Y. ABAYA

Journeyed back to the Lord's heavenly abode
on May 24, 2005 at the age of 60.

His beloved wife Fanny; only child Claudia; relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at Our Lady of Mt. Carmel Hall, New Manila, Quezon City.

Cremation services will be on May 28, 2005, 8:00 a.m. at La Funeraria Paz, Araneta Avenue, Quezon City.

In lieu of flowers, donation to the Romulo Y. Abaya Center for Peace and Human Development, Inc. will be appreciated.

CLASSIFIEDS

Come and celebrate Buddha's birthday at SM Megamall

ON MAY 28-29, the International Buddhist Progress Society and the Buddha's Light International Association – Philippines, will celebrate the Vesak Day at SM Megamall, 2nd Level, Activity Area of Mega A (near Marks and Spencer) from 10 a.m. to 9 p.m.

Vesak Day is the birth anniversary of Sakyamuni Buddha, the founder of Buddhism. Sakyamuni Buddha, was born around 600 BC in northern India as Prince Siddharta. As a youth, he enjoyed a sheltered and carefree life, until the day he ventured outside his father's palace. Beyond the palace walls, he found human misery, sufferings and unhappiness. Troubled by what he encountered, he left his family and palace at the age of twenty-nine, in search of "the truth" and to gain an understanding of human suffering and unhappiness. After 6 years of searching, self-cultivation and meditation, he finally attained enlightenment. He traveled extensively around northern India for the next forty-five years, spreading his teachings, until his death.

On May 28-29, a mass ceremony will be offered prior to the bathing of the image of the little prince, which is the highlight of the celebration. The ritual of pouring water onto the Buddha's statue signifies purification of one's mind, body and soul. Everyone maybe free from the bondage of evil deeds. Through pure mind and pure deeds, we will be able to attain true happiness, peace and enlightenment.

So, be there, at 2nd floor of SM Megamall Bldg. A (near Marks and Spencer) anytime from 10 a.m. to 9 p.m. Bring your family, friends and love one's and be a part of this great event. Don't miss this soulful event... together we pray for peace in our nation and the whole world!!!

Please come and join us! Let us all be showered with Buddha's blessings!!! For any queries, please call 523-4909, 5253680.

PMAP meet at Dusit

NATIONAL Wages and Productivity Commission (NWPC) Director, Ciriaco A. Lagunzad III, Employers Confederation of the Philippines (Ecop) chair, lawyer Miguel B. Varela and Trade Union Congress of the Philippines (TUCP) president Democrito Mendoza today meet at the 506th General Monthly Meeting of the Personnel Management Association of the Philippines (PMAP) at Dusit Hotel Nikko in Makati City to discuss "Wages and the Future of Labor and Management Relation."

The PMAP meet puts forth the idea of constant dialogue among the three represented institutions to discuss how to provide solutions to future wage-labor-management negotiations.

PMAP president Lina A. Aseneta, FPM of the Fernandez, Santos and Lopez CPAs said that PMAP would like to provide a venue where the government, industry and labor can sit down and focus on providing solutions to and preparing for the possible implications of the minimum wage hike."

Republic of the Philippines
DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND EMPLOYMENT
NATIONAL CAPITAL REGION

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pursuant to the Labor Code and the Omnibus Rules Implementing the Code.

This license shall be valid for the period **26 April 2005** to **25 April 2007** unless sooner revoked, cancelled or suspended for violation of the Labor Code and related issuances. Transfer or use by any other person or entity tenders this license null and void.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Official Seal of National Capital Region, Department of Labor and Employment, to be affixed at the City of Manila, Philippines, this **26th day of April 2005.**

(Sgd.) **RICARDO S. MARTINEZ, Sr., CESO III**
Regional Director

(Renewal of this license is thirty (30) days before expiration date)

Business seeks amendment to VAT law

By Michelle V. Remo

THE PHILIPPINE Chamber of Commerce and Industry said it would file for an amendment to the newly signed VAT law, specifically the provision that raised the corporate income tax rate from 32 to 35 percent.

PCCI chair Sergio Ortiz-Luis said a task force within the business group was preparing the proposed amendment that would be submitted to Congress soon. The group is now looking for legislators who would sponsor the proposal.

Ortiz-Luis said raising the corporate income tax rate would be a disincentive to investors.

"Our previous rate (of 32 percent) was already one of the highest in the region," he said in an interview yesterday after a press briefing on the creation of the National Center for Mediation held at the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas.

The increase in the corporate income tax rate elicited complaints from members of the business community, saying the move would further drag down their competitiveness against their counterparts overseas.

A few legislators also questioned the constitutionality of raising the corporate income tax rate, and its inclusion in the VAT law. They said the move to increase the corporate income tax should have been covered by a separate law, and should not have been made a mere provision of the VAT law.

The VAT law was signed by President Macapagal-Arroyo last Tuesday. The move was said to be a major development in the government's efforts to put its fiscal house in order, because the law is expected to generate P28.75 billion in additional revenues in the remaining parts of the year, and as much as P105 billion annually starting 2006.

Aside from raising the corporate income tax rate, the law also lifted the VAT exemptions of several products (such as oil and electricity) and services (such as those rendered by lawyers and doctors) were lifted. The law also gave the President the standby authority to raise the VAT rate from 10 to 12 percent.

Deficit seen at ₱166B

US-BASED Bear, Stearns Co. Inc. has projected that the Philippine government would substantially trim down its budget deficit to only P166 billion this year, in view of the signing into law of the value-added tax measure.

The projected deficit level would be equivalent to 3.1 percent of the country's expected gross domestic product for the year. This forecast is also much better than the government's budget deficit ceiling of P180 billion.

Last year, the budget deficit stood at P187.057 billion, or 3.9 percent of the GDP.

The Department of Finance has estimated that the VAT law would generate P28.75 billion in the remaining months of the year, and as much as P105 billion yearly staring next year.

The law lifts the VAT exemptions of several products—including oil and electricity—and services, such as that of lawyers and doctors. The law also raised the corporate income tax rate from 32 to 35 percent, and gives President Macapagal-Arroyo a standby authority to raise the VAT rate from 10 to 12 percent in 2006.

But Bear, Stearns said one possible risk of not achieving the expected revenue target from the tax measure could be a delay in the issuance of the law's implementing rules and regulations.

Michelle V. Remo

Wider tax exemption coverage sought

By Ronnel W. Domingo

THE PHILIPPINE Chamber of Commerce and Industry yesterday backed the proposal of increasing workers' take-home pay by widening the tax bracket eligible for income tax exemption.

This, according to the PCCI, is a better way of increasing the workers'. take-home pay than raising the minimum daily wage.

The PCCI's unit in Central Mindanao in a statement echoed the Employers Confederation of the Philippines' call for increasing the coverage of income tax exemption to those who earn not more than P120,000 a year from the current P96,000.

Ecop officials said such a relief to workers was needed following increases in transport fares amid the continuous uptrend in oil prices and the expected rise in prices of basic commodities due to the new tax measures.

For their part, the PCCI-CRM officials said workers who were being paid the minimum daily wage should be exempted from paying income taxes as a way of lessening the cost of living.

"A wage increase is not the answer to the situation because this would instead aggravate the problem for businessmen and employees alike," they said.

PCCI-CRM added that a wage hike would have a detrimental effect in the business sector. Wage hikes might force companies to either lay off workers or totally close shop. Some may opt to retreat to the underground economy.

Also, the Davao City Chamber of Commerce and Industry said it was pushing for a two-level minimum wage for Region 11—Davao Oriental, Davao del Norte, Davao del Sur and Compostela Valley.

DCCI officials said they favored one level of minimum wage for new entrants in the labor force and another for those already employed.

They said that a two-tiered minimum wage scheme would remove the wage distortion, prevent demoralization among longtime workers and "would make wage-fixing equitable, practical, logical and would provide more employment and more workers for employers.

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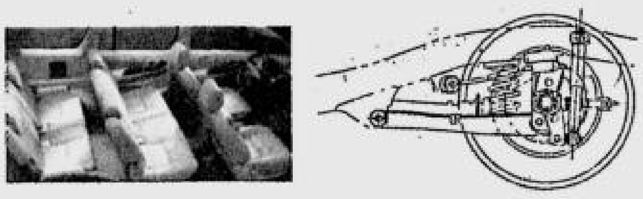

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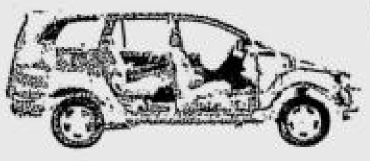

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LIFESTYLE

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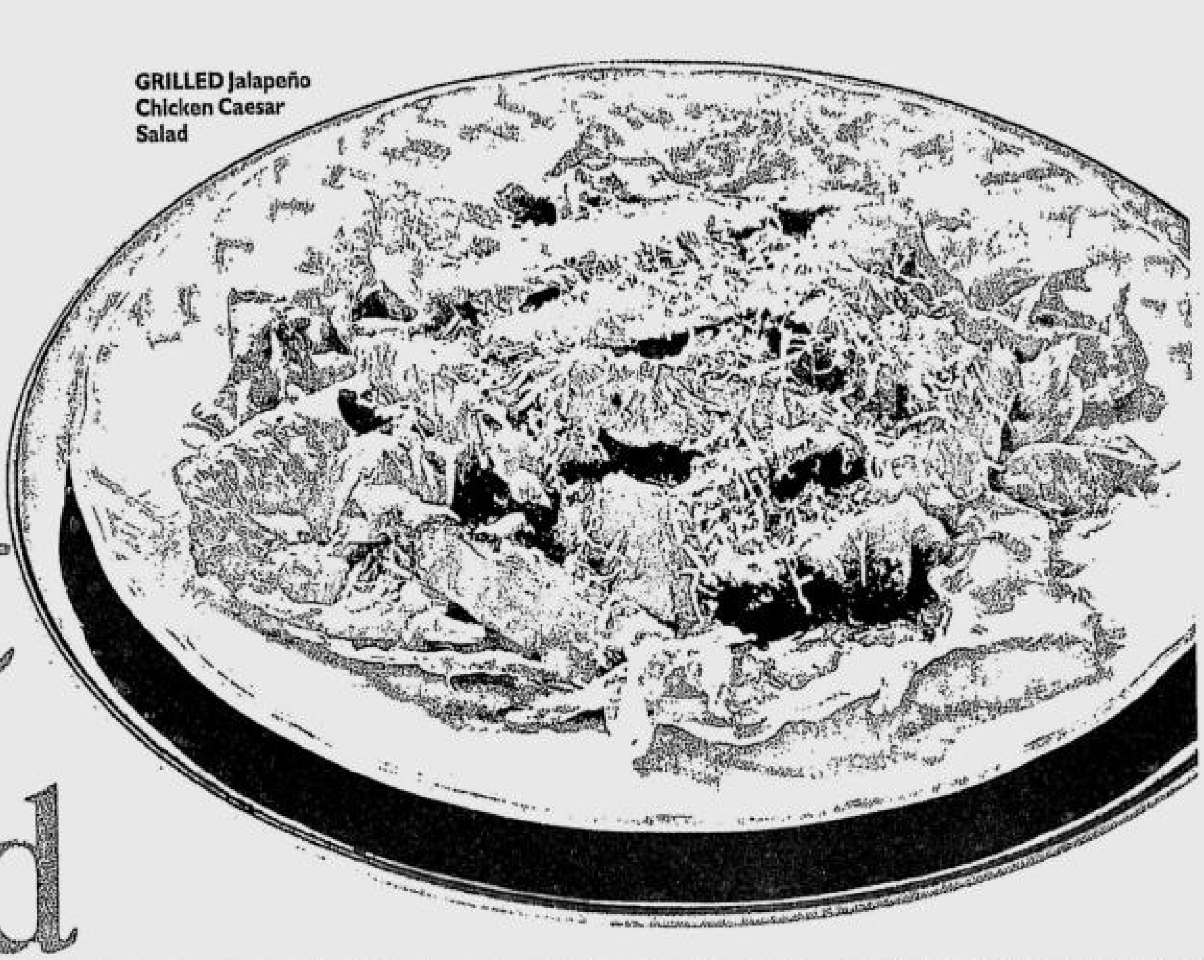
or email us at pr_lifestyle@inquirer.com.ph

Editor **Chelo Banal-Formoso**

MONDAY **ARTS & BOOKS** ● TUESDAY **FITNESS** ● WEDNESDAY **2BU** ● THURSDAY **FOOD** ● FRIDAY **FASHION & BEAUTY**

FRITTATA Smoked Salmon



GRILLED Jalapeño Chicken Caesar Salad

Perfect diet for people who love food

By Cesar Miguel G. Escaño
Contributor

WHAT do you call a diet that doesn't taste and feel like one?

Perfect Health by Triple V combines healthy and flavorful eating in an innovative package that defies the dietary mindset.

Who says you have to sacrifice taste to lose weight? Who says the key to a healthy lifestyle is a diet lacking in variety and personality?

Perfect Health corrects social misconceptions about healthy eating with its 14-day diet program. In fact, you probably will not even think of the word diet during that time.

Each day is a flavorful experience as Perfect Health takes you on a global tour of exotic tastes and healthy eats.

"Perfect Health is not about eating less. It is about eating right," says Triple V's VJ Villavicencio.

Flexible program

For P8,500, you can avail of the Perfect Health package. The 14-day diet covers breakfast, salad, soup, entrée, drink and dessert for each day. Perfect Health is not only light on the bathroom scale but also light on the wallet as each day would cost only a little over P600.

The food is also delivered to your doorstep at no extra charge. Perfect Health customers will receive the meals for the following day between 4 p.m. and 10 p.m.

And you choose what you want to eat and when during the day. Instead of the Wild Mushroom Omelette with Arakas Lederos for breakfast, you can have the salad of Grilled Chicken, Arugula-Romaine and Sundried Tomato Salad with Balsamic Vinaigrette.

Craving for Japanese? Day 5 gives you an entrée of Tebayaki (Chicken Breast) with Sauteed Vegetables. Feeling Mediterranean? Day 7 treats you to Horiatiki (Greek Summer Salad) which consists of Vine-ripped Tomato Wedges, Cucumber, Olives, Feta Cheese with Oregano Vinaigrette.

Craving for *lutong-bahay*? Enjoy a Day 10 breakfast of Grilled Boneless *Bangus* with *Ensaladang Talong* and Salted Eggs.

Losing weight

Perfect Health is the brainchild of VJ Villavicencio, who wanted to lose weight on his own terms. "Me, I love to eat," Villavicencio says. "When my wife told me to go on a diet, I told her I'd die."

So he collaborated with Triple-V chefs and dieticians to come up with a diet after his own heart. They designed a meal program that will let people lose weight in a "flavorful" way.

Before launching Perfect Health, Villavicencio tested the program himself. After 14 days, he lost 10 pounds. He then convinced a number of his friends to try. They lost 12 to 14 pounds on average, according to Villavicencio.

Perfect Health guarantees you will lose at least 10 pounds. As long as you don't cheat, of course. Fortunately, with so much flavor packed in every meal, staying on course is not

PERFECT/C2

How I lost 10" in my first 60 minute treatment*

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SWI - PASIG

BEFORE		AFTER
45	CHEST	37
42	WAIST	30 1/2
47	ABDOMEN	32 1/2
14 1/2	R. ARM	10
14 1/2	L. ARM	10
27	R. THIGH	22
27	L. THIGH	22

To date, she has lost 53 inches even though she has not yet completed her course. (Actual record can be seen at the Clinic.)

FITNESS HOTLINE 8873533
CELLPHONE 091-SLIMMERS
(75466377)

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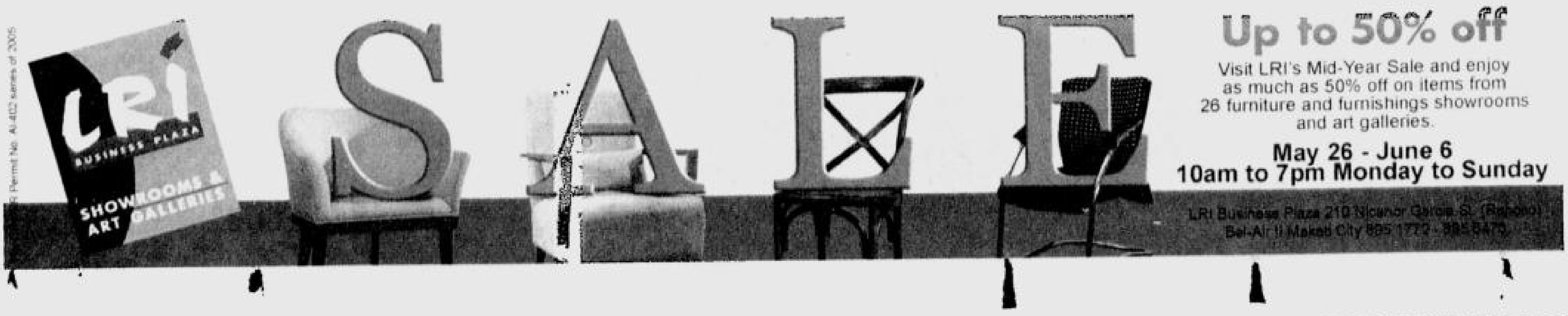

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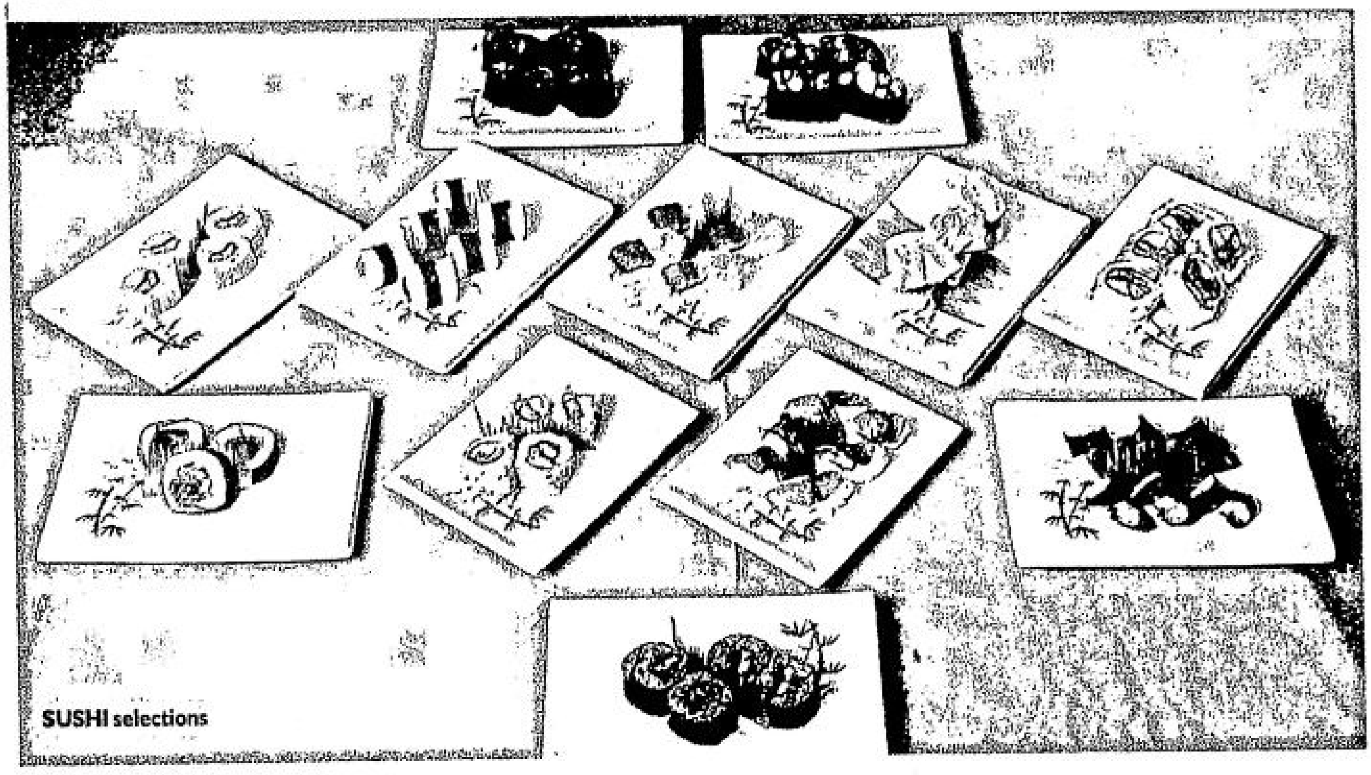

SUSHI selections

Triple V has come up with a meal program that will let people lose weight in a 'flavorful' way

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Madness
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May 27 and 28: Up to 12 midnight
May 29: Extended Sale during mall hours

Double Midnight Madness Special Offers:

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Free parking for four (4) hours for a minimum single receipt worth ₱1,000.00 dated May 27 & 28, 2005.

2. Free TOTE BAG
Free Tote Bag for a minimum single receipt worth ₱2,000.00 dated May 27 & 28, 2005.

3. Free COFFEE
For every meal with NESTEA ICED TEA or NESTEA LEMONADE at Glorietta Food Choices on May 27 & 28, 2005 (6pm-12mn) the customer is entitled to one (1) NESCAFE COFFEE upon presentation of receipt at the redemption booth.

4. Free MOVIE TICKETS
Buy 1 Take 1 cinema tickets on the last full show screening at Glorietta 1 and Greenbelt 1 cinemas, and the midnight show screening at Glorietta 4 cinemas on May 27 & 28, 2005.

5. Free GAMES
Pay ₱160 for a ₱200 load and get two (2) Yellow Swiper games for FREE from May 27-29, 2005.

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Ayala Center Hotline 752-7272 from 10am to 9pm

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DAD'S Amerigo 2 Buffet

Perfect d

From page C1

difficult.

"It's easy enough to follow. You'll be unlikely to cheat," Villavicencio says. "That's why I didn't want it to be restrictive."

Taste test

Triple V is offering a taste of the Perfect Health lifestyle in all its restaurants. Meals from the 14-day diet program are now part of the buffet.

Triple V has come up recently with three new buffets. Cross the seven seas of flavor with Kamayan's *Pyesta Na!*, Dad's Amerigo 2 and Saisaki's Unagi Kai. But if everything seems too rich for your waistline, pick the Perfect Health items on the buffet table.

Though Perfect Health is already available at bargain price, there's more good news for customers. They can avail of it via deferred payment.

Triple V offers a 3-12-month payment scheme via Equitable Visa and MasterCard. And, though delivery is free of charge, you get a 10-percent discount if you pick up the order at the nearest Triple V restaurant.

Triple V outlets are at Glorietta 3, tel. 8928898; Edsa, tel. 7051807/7051809; SM Megamall, tel. 6363785 (Dad's), 6331758 (Saisaki), 6342483 (Triple V Express); West Avenue, tel. 3728845/3728846; Padre Faura, tel. 5281723/5281724; Kamayan Pasay Road, tel. 8151463; and Alabang Town Center tel. 8075825

Grilled *Mahi-mahi* with Lemon-Oregano Vinaigrette and Briam (oven-roasted vegetables)

600 g *mahi-mahi* or tuna fillet
66.7 g lemon juice
4 g dried oregano
40 ml pure canola oil
2 g salt
1g pepper
Briam:
80 g zucchini, cut into ¾-inch-thick coins
180 g eggplant, cut into 1-inch cubes
160 g red onion, quartered
80 g yellow bell pepper, cut into 1-inch-thick slices
80 g red bell pepper, cut into 1-inch-thick slices
Marinade Mix:
20 ml extra-virgin olive oil
80 g tomato paste
4 g parsley, chopped
8 g garlic, peeled and chopped
3.2 g iodized salt
1.6 g freshly-ground black pepper

Fish Fillet:
Rub fish fillet with salt and pepper.
Sprinkle with oregano and drizzle with lemon juice.
Sear fish fillet in hot oil. Set aside.

Briam:
Pre-heat oven to 350°F.
Wash and trim the zucchini and vegetables.

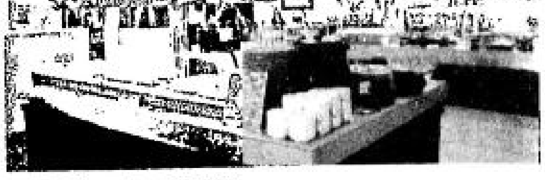
Slice zucchini into ¾-inch-thick coins, other vegetables into ½-inch-thick slices.

Mix all marinade ingredients. Toss vegetables in marinade and place in a baking dish.

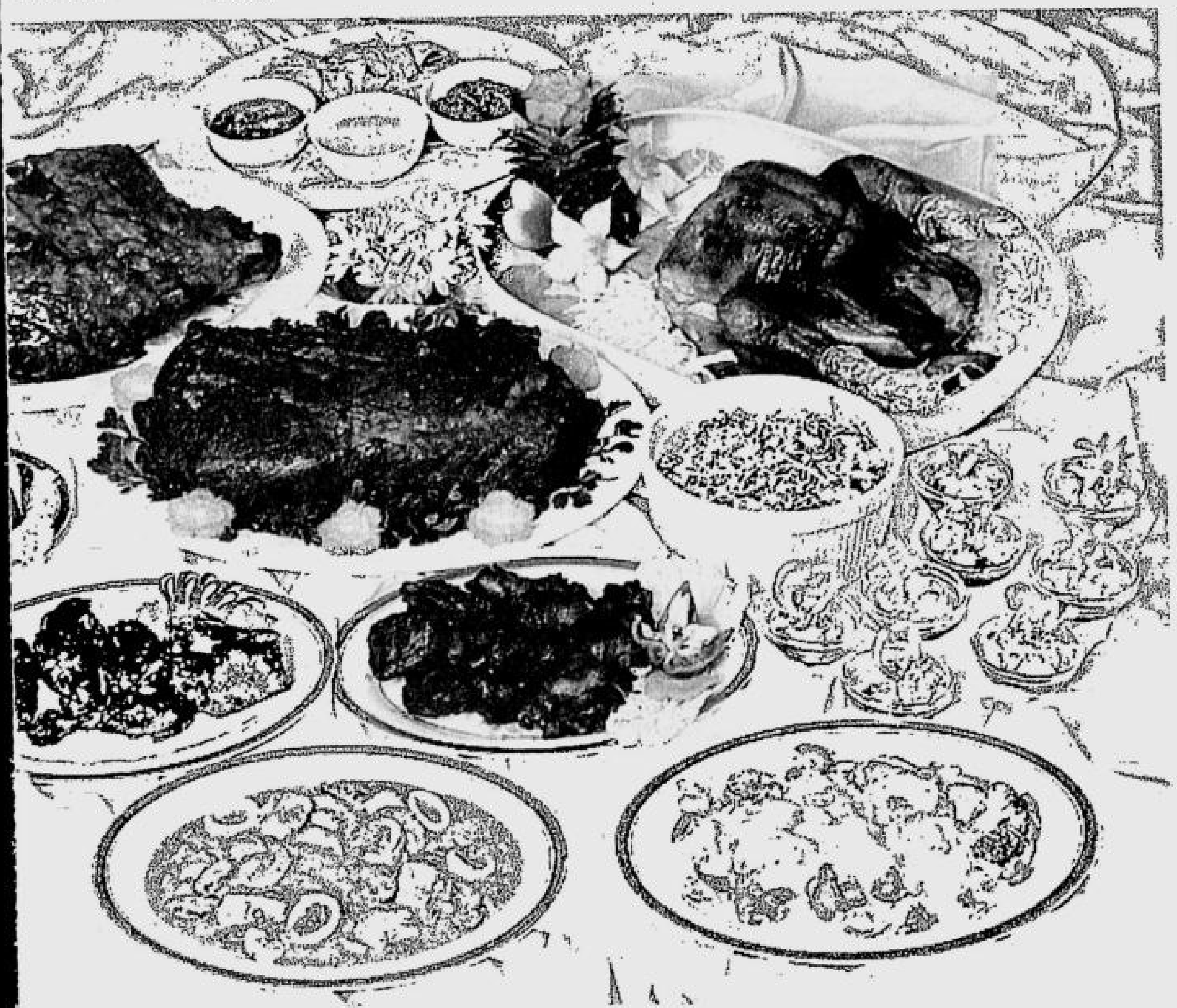
Place in oven and roast for 30 minutes. Toss the vegetables to ensure even cooking.

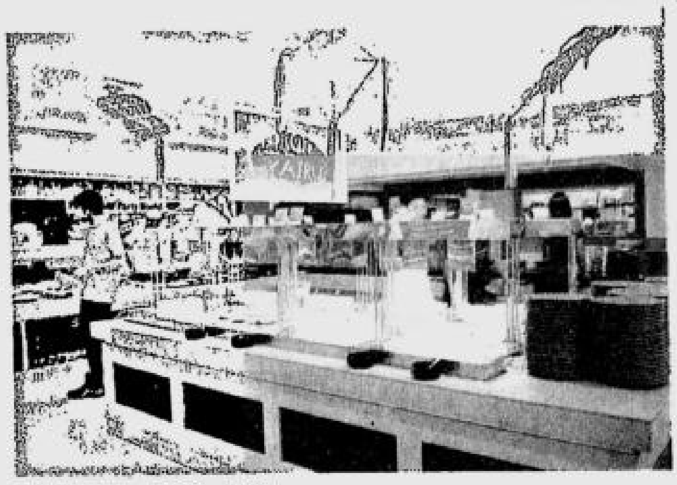
Roast for another 30 minutes or until vegetables are golden brown.

Place seared fish on serving plate and scoop roasted vegetables on to its sides.



DAD'S Amerigo 2 buffet



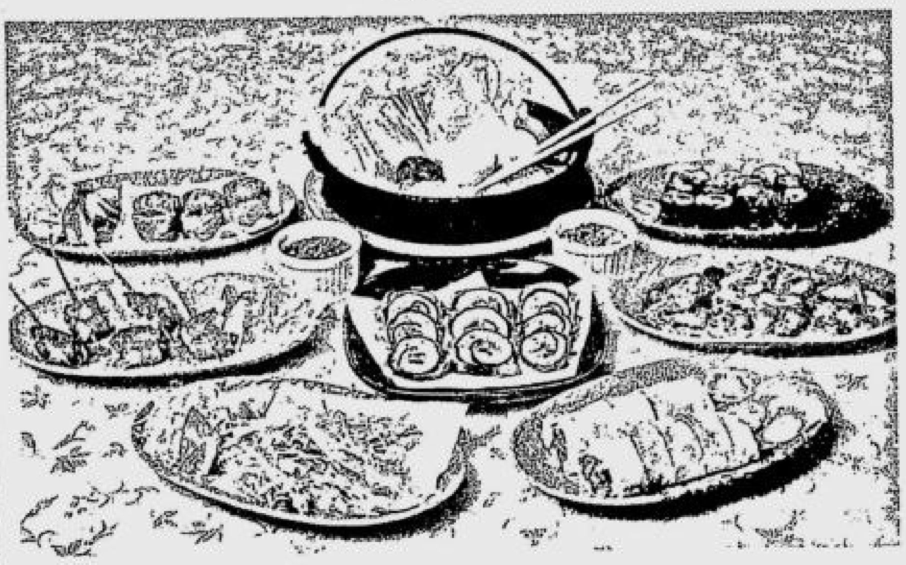


SAISAKI Unagi Kairu buffet

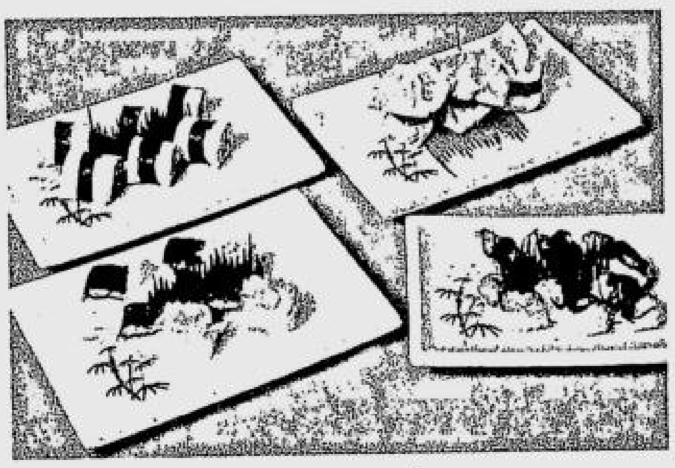
Piyesta Na!
Handaan Sa Kamayan

KAMAYAN Piyesta Na! buffet

iet for people who love food



SAISAKI festival buffet



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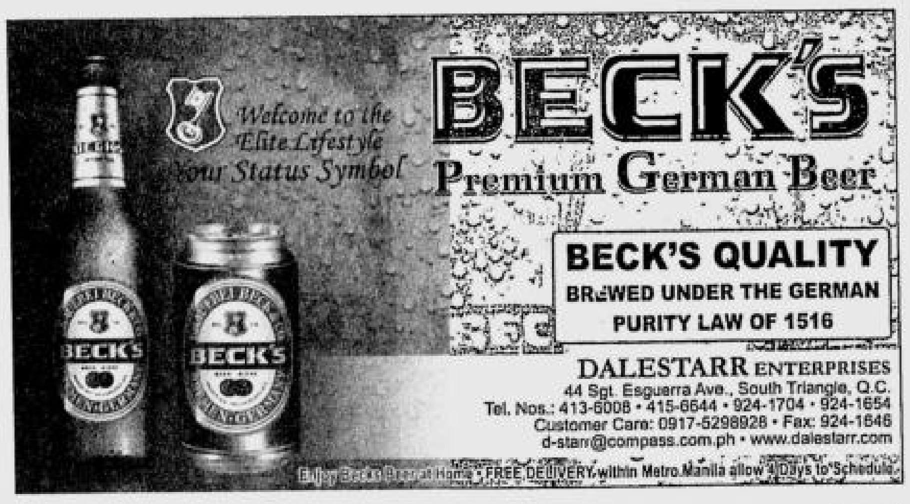

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MUSICAL DIRECTION - RONY FORTICH CHOREOGRAPHY - DENISA REYES DIRECTION-BART GUINGONA
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KIKKOMAN Teriyaki Marinade & SAUCE with Roasted Garlic
KIKKOMAN Teriyaki BASTE & GLAZE

Sweet Savory Kikkoman Teriyaki Sauces–made from the famous naturally-brewed Kikkoman soy sauce. Great for marinating meats, poultry and seafood. No artificial colors and flavors.

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Teriyaki Marinade and Sauce with Roasted Garlic
The appetizing aroma and wonderful flavor of roasted garlic adds a more familiar appeal to Teriyaki Lovers.

Easy to use, just marinate meat for 10 minutes then, grill or fry. Also good for Fried Rice and Stir Fried Vegetables.

Teriyaki Baste and Glaze
Makes your cooking easy and pleasurable. *Just brush directly onto meat or chicken while grilling, frying or barbecuing for a mouth-watering flavor.*

GRILLED
CHICKEN TERIYAKI
with ROASTED GARLIC

Ingredients:
4 chicken breast fillets
2 tsp grated ginger
1 cup Kikkoman Roasted Garlic Teriyaki Marinade and Sauce
325 g brown sugar
1 tbsp sesame oil
1/2 cup Kikkoman Teriyaki Baste and Glaze

Procedure:
1. Marinate the chicken in ginger, teriyaki sauce, brown sugar, and sesame oil overnight.
2. Preheat grill to medium high heat.
3. Grill marinated chicken for 6-8 minutes each side.
4. When cooked, brush chicken with teriyaki baste and glaze on all sides.
5. Serve with steamed rice. Makes 4 servings.

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www.kikkoman.com

BLESSING of the Quad Carpark, Tokyo Tokyo's first store

TOKYO Tokyo's first television commercial with celebrity endorser Janice de Belen

MIKEE Cojuangco and Geneva Cruz were also present during the Tokyo Tokyo Quad Carpark blessing.

MARTIN Nievera at the blessing

Resto chain celebrates 20th year

JAPANESE restaurant Tokyo Tokyo celebrates 20 years of success with a bang.

The latest store along Ayala Avenue was venue for the celebration and the official launching of the "Auto Ko 'To: The Last-Man-Standing Car Challenge," a fun promo with a car for a prize.

Since its first store opened in 1985 at the Quad Carpark, Tokyo Tokyo established itself as a fun and affordable way to enjoy quality Japanese food. It now has 40 stores.

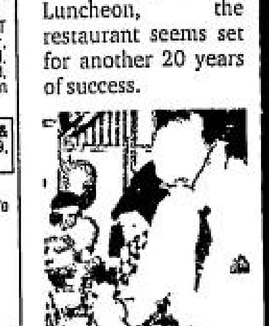
Event host JM Rodriguez started by having faithful Tokyo Tokyo customers look back to the past and the ex-bestsellers they missed. They were very pleasantly surprised when waiters served those same favorites, prepared specially for the party.

Past signature items served included *katsudon* burger, seafood spaghetti, pork *nikudon* and stuffed shrimp. Guests also enjoyed all-time bestsellers like sushi and *tonkatsu*, while Red Iced Tea kept flowing.

Featured entertainers were Nina and Rachel Alejandro, who admitted they were also Tokyo Tokyo loyalists.

During the celebration, Tokyo Tokyo gift certificates and shopping money were raffled off. A brand new Honda City on exhibit during the event was the grand prize in the "Auto Ko 'To: The Last-Man-Standing Car Challenge."

Judging from the wide smiles and expressions of pleasure seen on the faces of the guests who attended the Anniversary Appreciation Luncheon, the restaurant seems set for another 20 years of success.



DON Jaime Zobel, sampling a taste of Tokyo Tokyo's Japanese buffet, during the blessing

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Sylvia Reynoso-Gala
GOLD MEDALIST Academia de Gastronomos Madrid, Spain - 1964
Graduate : Full Course at Thai Cooking School, Oriental Hotel, Bangkok, Thailand

ERNEST REYNOSO GALA
Graduate : Full Course at Thai Cooking School, Oriental Hotel, Bangkok, Thailand
Studied at Chopstick and Hongkong Town Gas Culinary Schools

LEARN AND EARN! PRACTICAL; EASY, EXACT RECIPES

Leni Reynoso-Araullo
CERTIFIED WILTON METHOD SCHOOL INSTRUCTOR, Chicago, U.S.A.
Masters in Cake Decorating, Wilton School, Chicago, U.S.A., 1974 under Martha & Stanley Wilton
Graduate : Chicago School of Cooking and Catering
Graduate : Full Course, Thai Cooking School at the Oriental Hotel, Bangkok
Studied cooking in Europe, South America & Hongkong
Co-founder, Reynoso Cooking and Baking School, March, 1963

MAY 26 THU 2:30 - 6:00PM - 9 MONEY MAKING FOR TEENS & ADULT BEGINNERS; CHOCOLATE CHIP COOKIES, CHOCOLATE CRINKLES, BUTTERSCOTCH BROWNIES, LENGUA DE GATO, CHEWY MALLOW BARS, RUSSIAN TEA COOKIES, VIRGIE PANTALEON'S DATE WALNUT COOKIES, SPECIAL POLVORON, LEBANESE DATE BOAT TARTS. **P1,200. BY ERNEST**

MAY 28 SAT 2:30 - 5:30PM - MAX'S STYLE FRIED CHICKEN - JOLLIBEE STYLE CHICKEN W/ GRAVY; CHICKEN BURGER; DELICIOUS POTATO SALAD; SIZZLING GRILLED PORK CHOPS; 4 SEASONS PUNCH; RIPE MANGO JUICE, MELON TAPIOCA W/ SAGO; GREEN MANGO JUICE. **P1,200 BY SYLVIA**

MAY 30 MON 2:30 - 5:00PM - POPULAR CAFE FAVOURITES. BEST EVER CARROT AND WALNUT CAKE WITH CREAM CHEESE FROSTING; TEXAS STYLE CORN MUFFINS; STREUSEL TOPPED MUFFINS; CHOCO CRUMB CAKE MUFFINS; BLUEBERRY CRUMB TOPPED MUFFIN **P1,200. IDEAL FOR HOME BUSINESS. BY ERNEST**

MAY 31 TUES 2:30 - 6:00PM - 9 SPECIAL BARBEQUE; BEEF TERIYAKI IN SKEWERS; PORK SPARERIBS WITH HOISIN SAUCE. MAGNOLIA CHICKEN DRUMSTICKS IN HONEY SAUCE, (SATE A JAM) CHICKEN SKEWERS IN PEANUT SAUCE. BEEF RIBS WITH PEKING NOODLES; DELICIOUS PORK SPARERIBS, NEW KOREAN BEEF BARBEQUE; NASIGORENG (INDONESIAN FRIED RICE); FERNANDO MIGUEL ERENETA CHICKEN HONEY; THE BEST PORK BARBEQUE WITH SPECIAL PEANUT SAUCE **P1,200. BY ERNEST.**

JUNE 1 WED 1:00 - 5:00PM - FREE COOKING DEMO BY ERNEST & SYLVIA. ROBINSON'S PIONEER COR. EDSA, MANDALUYONG. (FOUNTAIN AREA). 200 FREE PANASONIC COOKBOOKS BY SYLVIA WILL BE GIVEN AWAY TO THE 1ST 200 PARTICIPANTS. A MINI RAFFLE OF PANASONIC KITCHEN APPLIANCES, HUNT'S, CENTURY TUNA, ARGENTINA AND OTHER SPONSORS WILL BE HELD. DEMO ORGANIZER: CELEBRITY RECIPES MAGAZINE.

JUNE 3 FRI 2:30 - 6:00PM - THAI NOODLES, RICE DESSERTS III - (9 RECIPES). THAI STREET NOODLES, PAD THAI; CURRIED NOODLES WITH BEEF; CRAB FRIED RICE; PORK FRIED RICE; BLACK RICE PUDDING; TAPIOCA PUDDING; THAI CUSTARD. SQUASH WITH COCONUT CREAM. **P1,500. BY ERNEST**

JUNE 4 SAT 2:30 - 6:15PM - LIGHT AIRY ENSAYMADAS. CHEESE-ROLLS, SPECIAL EGG PANDESAL WITH FILLING, CINNAMON ROLLS. BREAD BAKING MADE EASY! **P1,200. BY SYLVIA.**

JUNE 6 MON 2:30 - 5:30PM - UBE CHIFFON CAKE; ROCKY ROAD. MOIST CHOCOLATE CAKE; FOOD FOR THE GODS AND WALNUT BROWNIES. PLUS TIPS ON CONVERTING CAKES INTO JELLY ROLLS AND MUFFINS. DELICIOUS CAKES SOLD IN TOP BAKESHOPS! ALL CAKES WITH DIFFERENT ICINGS! **P1,200. BY SYLVIA**

JUNE 7 TUES 2:30 - 5:30PM PASTAS AND SALAD FESTIVALS! 8 DELICIOUS RECIPES! BEEF CHEESY BAKED MACARONI; SPAGHETTI WITH PHILADELPHIA CREAM SAUCE; MEXICAN CORNMEAL CASSEROLE; SCALLOPED POTATOES SMOTHERED WITH KRAFT MOZZARELLA CHEESE; CHICKEN ASPARAGUS SALAD; CENTURY TUNA APPLE SALAD; VEGETABLE BOWL WITH FRENCH DRESSING; MELTINGLY DELICIOUS EGG CASSEROLE. **P1,200. BY ERNEST**

JUNE 8 WED - 2:30 - 6:00PM 2 KINDS OF ROAST BEEF- MONTEREY STANDING RIB-ROAST AND BACON WRAPPED BONELESS ROAST WITH GRAVY, CREMA DE FRUTA, SIZZLING SHRIMPS IN GARLIC SAUCE, FRIED SQUID RINGS, CHICKEN ALEXANDER, SEAFOOD MEDLEY SOUP SERVED ON CRUSTY BREAD BOWL FROM FRENCH BAKER **P1,200. BY ERNEST**

JUNE 9 THU 2:30 - 5:30PM - SPECIAL LESSON ON MORE MONEY MAKING OPPORTUNITES. SAVORY STYLE CHICKEN; ROAST MONTEREY PORK LIEMPO; MRS. OLIVIA TEE'S FOOKIEN STYLE AMOY FRESH LUMPIA; PORK SIOMAI WITH QUAIL EGGS, HONGKONG SHRIMP SIOMAI; HACAO (SHRIMP DUMPLING WITH HOMEMADE CLEAR WRAPPER). **P1,200. BY SYLVIA**

JUNE 10 FRI 2:30 - 5:30PM - DELICIOUS DIMSUM STYLE PORK SPARERIBS ; SPICY CHICKEN FEET, SHRIMPS ON TOAST; BUCHI WITH SESAME SEEDS; AUTHENTIC HONGKONG - CHINESE CONGEE WITH DIFFERENT TOPPINGS. FISH FILLET; PORK; SZECHUAN VEGETABLES; BOLA-BOLA; SHRIMP; PORK LIVER, KIDNEY, PIG-STOMACH **P1,200. BY SYLVIA**

JUNE 11 SAT 2:30 - 6:00PM POPULAR JAPANESE DISHES II - LEARN 8 DELICIOUS RECIPES! SHABU-SHABU WITH 2 SAUCES, ASSORTED CRISPY TEMPURA; GRILLED PORK AND BEEF SLICE; UDON(VERY SPECIAL NOODLES) FRIED TOFUS IN SPECIAL SAUCE; BREADED CHICKEN WINGS WITH VINEGAR SAUCE; JAPANESE MIXED FRIED RICE. PLUS BONUS RECIPES OF COMPLETE SUSHI BAR. **P1,200. BY SYLVIA**

JUNE 21 TUE 2:30 - 6:00PM - THE BEST OVEN-BAKED PAELLA. ROAST STUFFED MAGNOLIA JUMBO CHICKEN; PASTEL DE LENGUA; CALLOS MADRILENA; BLACK FOREST #2. IDEAL FOR CATERERS AND PARTY GIVERS **P1,200. BY ERNEST**

JUNE 23 THUR 2:30 - 6:00PM - BUSINESS BAKESHOP BEST SELLERS! BIG UNIFORM SIZED FROZEN UP TO 6 MONTHS SILVANAS (MINI SANS RIVAL); BRAZO DE MERCEDES; CLASSIC CHOCOLATE MOUSSE CAKE; MACAPUNO PANDAN CAKE WITH MAGNOLIA GOLD BUTTER ICING **P1,200. BY MORELLA.**

JUNE 24 FRI 2:30 - 6:00PM SOFTEST DOUGHNUTS FOR BUSINESS! - NO OVEN NOR SPECIAL EQUIPMENT NEEDED. INCLUDES CHOCOLATE AND MARBLED DOUGHNUTS WITH SEVERAL FILLINGS; ICINGS; DIPS. PLUS BONUS RECIPES OF THICK SPANISH CHOCOLATE AND CHURROS. **P1,200. BY MORELLA.**

JUNE 25 SAT 2:30 - 6:00PM - REYNOSO - GALA & ARAULLO KAKANIN! MELTS INTHE MOUTH SPECIAL RICE BIBINGKA; SAPIN SAPIN ESPESYAL; DELICIOUS, EASY TO MAKE RICE SUMAN; HOMEMADE HOPIA WITH MONGO OR UBE FILLING. BONUS RECIPE: APONG METYANG'S CASSAVA CAKE **P1,500. BY MORELLA.**

JUNE 26 SUN 2:30 - 6:00PM - BEST SELLER OVEN BAKED CHICKEN PIES IN MUFFIN CUPS; FLAKY EMPANADA, MELTS IN THE MOUTH MAMON, MAGNOLIA GOLD BUTTER SLICES; PUTO PAO. BONUS RECIPES OF MACAROONS; PUTO FLOUR UBE AND TRI-COLORED PUTO. **P1,200. BY MORELLA.**

JUNE 27 MON 2:30 - 6:15PM - MULTI LAYERED, FLAKIEST CROISSANTS, PUFF PASTRY MEAT FILLED TURN OVERS, ASSORTED GLAZED DANISH PASTRIES. **P1,200. BY MORELLA**

JUNE 28 TUES 2:30 - 6:00PM MONEY MAKING FAST CART SPECIALTIES BY MORELLA DELICIOUS CORN DOGS. WAFFLE WITH HOMEMADE CHOCOLATE / CARAMEL; NACHOS "TOPOTOS" WITH MONTEREY MEAT FILLING AND CHEESE DIP, HOMEMADE SHAWARMA WRAP WITH BEEF FILLING AND CHEESE DIP **P1,200.**

JUNE 29 WED 2:30 - 6:00PM 6 MONEY MAKING PIES AND CAKES BY MORELLA- NO BAKE GRAHAM LAYERED MANGO ICE BOX CREAM CHEESE CAKE, LIGHT BANANA LOAF CRUNCH SLICES SOLD IN BAKESHOPS; OATMEAL BUTTER CRUST BLUEBERRY BARS. FRESH BUCO PIE. CLASSIC EGG PIE; BANANA CREAM PIE. **P1,200.**

JUNE 30 THU 2:30 - 6:00PM THE LATEST MONEY MAKING HOTEL & BAKESHOP BESTSELLERS! CHOCO LAVA CAKES(CHOCO CENTERS WILL OOZE OUT), "TARTUFO" (ITALIAN DOME CHOCOLATE COVERED ICE CREAM CAKE WITH CHOCO CAKE BASE CAN BE FROZEN FOR A MONTH OR MORE); CREAM PUFFS WITH BAVARIAN & CHOCO FILLING WITH 2 GLAZES; THE YUMMIEST OF NEW YORK RESTAURANT SCHOOL CHEF INSTRUCTRESS **LORRIE REYNOSO'S BAKED CHEESE CAKE. P1,200 BY MORELLA.**

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THE ESSENTIAL COOKING SERIES: This 20-day hands on class is our innovative way of teaching the basics of cooking & baking. This program is for anyone who wants to work towards becoming a professional chef. Class begins July 20 – September 28, 2005. Classes are held every Wednesdays & Thursdays from 10:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

Tuition fee includes ingredients, manual, aprons, chef's jacket and chef's kit.

For more information call 726-5316 or 412-7792 and ask Lirio & Rita.

SCHEDULE OF CLASSES

June 1 (Wednesday)10:00 a.m. –5:00 p.m. (classroom A) INTRODUCTION TO SPANISH COOKING by: Chef Ed Quimson, is a seasoned master chef of Spanish origin, creator of RASTRO Tapas Bar & Restaurant at Rockwell and Chef Ed's Restaurant at Salcedo Village, Makati City. He has also lent his expertise to such restaurants as La Tasca, Via Mare, The Nielsen Tower, the Member's Lounge of the Phil. Stock Exchange & the Subic Yacht Club" Croquetas, Tortilla de Patata, Salpicao, Arroz Abanda, Aioli, Callos Al Estilo, Pescado Al Penalti & Natillas (Spanish Custard). P2,500

June 2 (Thursday)10:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.(classroom A) PHILIPPINE SWEETS AND DELICACIES PART II by: Chef Carol Acosta, food consultant to multinational food companies & restaurants " Tres Manas with Tablea Real, Biko with Budbud, Suman Visaya, Guapple Pie, Puto Ube, Puto Especial (ordinary and Glutinous Lihiya) and Mango Tart. P1,500

June 2 (Thursday)10:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. (classroom B) EGGS & BREAKFAST COOKERY by: Chef Jane Paredes, Food Consultant, trained at the Culinary Institute of America Hyde Park, New York and Peter Kump's New York Cooking School" Learn the different techniques of cooking eggs properly: Poached, Fried, Sunny Side-Up, Basted or Country Style, Over Easy, Over Medium, Over Hard, Shirred & Scrambled Recipes: Eggs Benedict, French Omelet, Egg Mimosa Tart, Waffles, Muesli or Cereal Cup plus bonus recipes! P2,500

June 3 (Friday) 9:00 a.m. – 1:30 p.m (classroom A) BASIC CAKES & ICINGS FOR BEGINNERS by: Heny Sison "Butter Cake with Butter Icing, Moist Chocolate Cake with Fudge Icing, Mocha Cake with No-Melt Butter Icing, Lemon Chiffon Cake with Boiled Icing & Sponge Cake with Whipped Cream Icing. P1,500

June 3 (Friday)2:00 – 5:00 p.m. (classroom A)BROWNIES & BARS by: Heny Sison" Chewy Moist Brownies, Carrot Cake Bars with Cream Cheese Icing, Lemon Cheesecake Bars, Brownies with Caramel Center & Butterscotch Bars. P1,500

June 4 (Saturday)10:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m (classroom A) SOUTH BEACH DIET PHASE 2 & 3 by: Jacqueline H. Alleje, owner of Rizal Dairy Farm, Swiss-Pinoy restaurateur (Vieux Chalet Swiss restaurant), organic caterer and food consultant (Patra's naturally green, global, gourmet)" South Beach Diet Phase 2 continues the discussion on the diet & healthy nutrition with recipes of Stage II. Participants will share their experience from stage I. South Beach Diet Phase 3 is the introduction to the most liberal stage of the diet. Complete meal plan & discussion on how to create your own recipes by including your favorite dishes in your diet. Inclusive of complete menu plan recipes and cooking demo. P3,500

June 6 (Monday)9:00 a.m. –12:30 noon(classroom A) DELI SANDWICHES & SALADS by: Chef Jane Paredes, Food Consultant, trained at the Culinary Institute of America Hyde Park, New York and Peter Kump's New York Cooking School. " This class will teach you how to prepare & package deli-style sandwiches & salads for take out counter & food to go. Recipes: Assorted Cold Cuts, Chicken Pastrami, Tuna-Apple, Grilled Eggplant & Cheese, Crabstick Salad, Homemade Potato Salad, Aioli Dip with Potato Chips, Fresh Fruit Compote and Garden Green Salad. P1,700

June 6 (Monday)1:30 – 4:30 p.m (classroom A) COOKIE BARS FOR SELLING by: Chef Jane Paredes "Chocolate Revel Bars, Fudgy Brownies, Pecan Bars, Oatmeal Raisin Bars and Lemon Bars. P1,500

June 6 (Monday)10:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. (classroom B) NEW CLASS! ROASTING CLASS by: Chef Ed Quimson "Learn from this hands-on class the treasured family recipes of Chef Ed. Roast Beef, Crown Roast of Pork, Roast Iberian Chicken, Roast Leg of Lamb w/ Apricot Glaze, Roast Duckling of Black Cherry & Brandy Sauce, Roast Turkey with Corn Bread, Chorizo & Chestnut Filling. P4,800

June 7 (Tuesday)10:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. (classroom A) COFFEE CLASS by: Chef Aileen Anastacio-Sandoval, owner of Goodies N' Sweet Bakeshop & C'est Si Bon, Dean's list graduate of Culinary at the California Culinary Academy" If you are planning to open a coffee shop this course is for you. Learn the four fundamentals of coffee brewing, home espresso, guide to steaming & foaming. Make fun toppings & garnishes & master the art of coffee making. Recipes: Caffe Latte, Caffe Mocha, Caffe Americano, Cappuccino, Espresso Macchiato & Espresso Con Panna, Almond Coffee Freeze, Icy Rum Coffee Cream, Toffee Coffee, Mudslide Malt, Mocha Rumba, Rocky Road and more! P3,000

June 8 (Wednesday)10:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m (classroom A)KOREAN COOKING I: A WORKSHOP by: Chef Cecile Park, owner of Sila Korean Restaurant & food consultant to various Korean restaurants in Metro Manila" Beef Bulgogi (Tenderloin & ordinary), Chicken Bulgogi, Pork Bulgogi, Chap Chae, Mi Yuk Guk (Soups: Seaweeds, Beef or Tahong), Bibimbap & Kalbi Jim. P2,500

June 11 (Saturday)9:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m (classroom A) SECRETS NO MORE! by: Heny Sison " Decadent Chocolate Cake with Fudge Icing & Caramel Sauce, Lemon Torte, Ensaymada, Almond Sansrival, Strawberry Shortcake & Ube Cake. P3,000

June 13 (Monday)10:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. (classroom A) PIZZA CLASS WORKSHOP by: Chef Giorgio Bucciarelli, Master Pizzaiolo & Barista, food consultant of various Italian restaurants all over Metro Manila, graduated at Culinary Institute, Milan, Italy "In this class you will learn the history, concept and design of pizza making. Learn how to make pizza dough, tomato base sauce, white sauce base; preparation, set up a pizza counter, know the ingredients and toppings. Recipes: Margherita, Napoli Classica, 4 Formaggi, Pizza Vegetariana, La Gibiera, Piccantina, 4 Stagioni, Calzone & Frutti di Mare. Demonstration with student participation. P2,500

June 16 (Thursday)7:30 a.m. – 4:00 p.m (classroom A)THAI SPECIALTIES: A WORKSHOP PART I FROM THE MARKET TO THE DINING TABLE by: Chef Dino Guingona, graduate of California Culinary Academy and at the Thai Cooking School in Chiangmai "The class starts with a visit to the Farmers market in Cubao Q.C. led by Chef Dino Guingona, students will learn the proper selection and buying of ingredients. The rest of the morning will be spent on the preparation, afterwhich each participants gets to whip up Thai specialties such as: Tum Yam Koong, Khao Pad Koong (Shrimp Fried Rice), Nam Phrik Kaeng (Green Curry Paste), Kaeng Khao Wan Kai (Green Chicken Curry), Mee-Krop (Crispy Fried Noodles), Hor Moak (Steamed Curry) P2,800

June 18 (Saturday)10:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. (classroom A) BASIC FLOWER ARRANGEMENTS by: Glenn Remorca, floral designer "Learn the theories, styles, trends, techniques, sourcing, flower care and maintenance, basic forms, arrangements and flowers for weddings. Lecture, demonstration and hands-on production. Bring a pair of scissors. P2,500

June 20 (Monday)10:00 a.m. –4:00 p.m. (classroom A)DIMSUM I by: Chef Katherine Sison "Congee, Siomai, Dumpling, Chicken Feet, Fried Shrimp Ball and Buchi. P1,500

June 20 (Monday)10: a.m. – 4:00 p.m.(classroom B)TAPAS I by: Chef Ed Quimson "Croquetas Chicken, Croquetas Paella Negra, Gambas, Samosa Tinapa, Pimientos Alinadas, Batido Salmon, Potato Anchovy, Croquetas & Fabada.P2,500

June 21 (Tuesday)10:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.(classroom A)INTRODUCTION TO JAPANESE COOKING by: Chef Koichi Kondo, licensed cook from Ehime, Japan and food consultant to various Japanese restaurants " Learn all-time favorites Japanese dishes applicable to home & professional cooking such as: Sushi, Sashimi, Miso Soup, Tempura, Teriyaki, Udon Noodles in Clay Pot, Chicken Teriyaki & Japanese Fried Rice.P2,500

June 21 (Tuesday)7:30 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. (Classroom B)THAI SPECIALTIES: A WORKSHOP PART II FROM THE MARKET TO THE DINING TABLE by: Chef Dino Guingona, graduate of California Culinary Academy and at the Thai Cooking School in Chiangmai "The class starts with a visit to the Farmers market in Cubao Q.C. led by Chef Dino Guingona, students will learn the proper selection and buying of ingredients. The rest of the morning will be spent on the preparation, afterwhich each participants gets to whip up Thai specialties such as: Kaeng Liang (Thai Hot Soup), Steamed Mussels with Sweet Basil, Phanang Nua (Beef Red Curry) and Po Pia Thot (Thai Spring rolls with crabmeat, chicken and vegetables). P2,800

June 22 (Wednesday)9:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. (classroom A)MY FAVORITE CAKES by: Heny Sison "Caramel Cake II, Banana Nut Cake, Pandan – Macapuno Cake, Flourless Chocolate Cake, Peach Walnut Torte and Brazo de Mercedes. P1,500

June 22 (Wednesday)10:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m (classroom B) PARTY FOODS AND DRINKS by: Chef Jane Paredes "PARTY FOODS: Baby Riblets, Cheese & Spinach in Phyllo, Baked Mussels, Crab Cakes w/ Cocktail Sauce, Gambas w/ Crablet, Chicken Salad in Rice Paper Roll, Cheese & Walnut Canapes DRINKS: Singapore Sling, Planter's Punch, Long Island Iced Tea, Blushing Piña Colada, Blue Hawaiian, Frozen Iced Teas and Fruit Iced Tea. P2,500

June 23 (Thursday)9:00 – 1:00 p.m. (classroom A)SUSHI CLASS by: Chef Koichi Kondo "Temaki-Zushi (Do-It Yourself Sushi Rolls), Bara-Zushi (Scattered Sushi), Inari-Zushi (Sushi Pockets), Futo-Maki Zushi (Thick-Rolled Sushi), Teka-Maki (Hand-rolled Tuna Sushi), Kappa-Maki (Sea Cucumber Sushi).P1,700

June 23 (Thursday)1:30 – 5:30 p.m. (classroom A) JAPANESE COOKING I (All Time Favorite Japanese Recipes) by: Chef Koichi Kondo "Miso Soup, Tempura, Nimono, Yakimono, California Maki, Chilled Soba, Noodles with Nori, Skewered Dumplings with Brown Sauce.P1,700

June 23 (Thursday)10:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m (classroom B) SIOPAO & MAMI WORKSHOP by: Chef Katherine Sison "Chicken Bola-Bola, Asado Pao, Bola-bola Pao, Jumbo Siopao with Chinese Sausage, Chicken Asado Mami & Beef Mami.P2,500

June 24 (Friday)10:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.(classroom A)PHILIPPINE SWEETS & DELICACIES PART III by: Chef Carol Acosta "Bibingka Vigan, Bibingka Pinipig, Tupig, Mamon Especial, Egg Pie and Pichi-Pichi Pandan. P1,500

June 25 (Saturday)1:00 – 5:00 p.m. (classroom A) SIMPLE GOURMET by: Chef Dino Guingona "Seared Scallops with Wild Mushrooms, Mesclun Salad with Kesong Puti in Anchovy Vinaigrette, Chilean Seabass in Miso-Mirin Marinade, Grilled Rib-eye w/ Fresh Foie Gras in Truffle Essence. P2,700

June 27 (Monday)10:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.(classroom A) HANDAANG PINOY FAVORITES PART I by: Chef Carol Acosta "Embutido Batangas in Banana Leaves, Lengua with Creamy Sauce, Callos, Menudo, Relleno and Spring Rolls. P2,500

June 27 (Monday)10:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.(classroom B)FRESH PASTA WORKSHOP by: Chef Giorgio Bucciarelli "Learn how to make pasta egg dough, green spinach dough, black pasta dough, different kinds of pastas: lasagna, green lasagna, ravioli, tortellini, cannelloni, fettuccine green & black, stuffings for ravioli, tortellini and cannelloni. Sauces for lasagna, tortellini, ravioli & cannelloni. Recipes: Lasagna alla Bolognese, Lasagna al 4 Formaggi, Lasagna al Pesto, Cannelloni alla Ricotta and Spinaci, Ravioli alla Boscaiola al Burro e Salvia, Tortellini al 4 Formaggi, alla Panna Prosciutto e Funghi, Green Fettuccine alla Montanara, Black Fettuccine ai Frutti di Mare. Demonstration with student participation. P2,500

June 28 – 29(Tuesday-Wednesday) 9:00 a.m. –4:00 p.m.(classroom A) CAKE DECORATING COURSE I by: Heny Sison "Learn the basics of cake decorating: icing, color, star, shell, dots, outline and scallop borders; the rose, figure piping: clowns & bodies. Each student will bake & decorate a character birthday cake. Full participation. P4,000

June 28 (Tuesday)10:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.(classroom B) BROWNIE WORKSHOP by: Chef Jill Sandique, Food Stylist & Consultant, Blue Ribbon graduate of Peter Kump's New York Cooking School "Fudgy Brownies, Chocolate Chip Butter Blondies, Chocolate Chip Walnut Bars, Cappuccino Brownies, Butterscotch Brownies, Marbled Cream Cheese Brownies, Fruit & Nut Bars and White Chocolate Brownies P2,500

June 29 (Wednesday)1:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m (classroom B) SIMPLE GOURMET II by: Chef Dino Guingona "French Onion Soup with Four Cheeses, Lobster Thermidor, Tenderloin Kebabs & Stuffed Portabello Mushrooms. P2,700

June 30 (Thursday)10:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. (classroom B) COOKIE WORKSHOP by: Chef Jill Sandique "Chocolate Chip Cookies, Food for the Gods, Angel's Sigh, Greek Almond Crescent, Mocha Streusel Squares, Cinnamon Sugar Cookies, Caramel Pecan Bars and Chocolate Chip Almond Biscotti. P2,500

June 30 (Thursday)10:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m (classroom B) DOUGHNUT WORKSHOP by: Chef Jane Paredes " Recipes: Sugar, Honey – Glazed, Caramel Pecan, Chocolate Nut, Mango Glazed, Chocolate Bavarian, Blueberry Filled, Strawberry Filled, Apple Filled, Twist Cinnamon Sugar, Dulce de Leche, Cream Cheese Honey Boston Cream, Sour Cream Cake Doughnut & Creamy Glazed P 2,500

We are now accepting enrollees for ESSENTIAL BAKING & PASTRY SERIES. Class begins on August 19 – November 19, 2005 every Fridays & Saturdays.

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DOS Hermanos Island

SAUD Beach

Ilocano recipe and tips from the Gov

KITCHEN RESCUE

Reggie Aspiras

TODAY, I give you part 2 of the Ilokano Gustatory experience with Gov. Bong Marcos, your GI (genuine Ilocano) favorites and, since Pagudpud has drawn a lot of interest, some pictures of Paradise!

Bong on his favorite Ilokano dishes:

"I like all the traditional dishes but have become a stickler for freshness. Luckily, [fresh ingredients] are not hard to get here in Ilocos. The *dinardraan* here is hard to beat as is our *kilawin nga kalding*. There is a less known dish called *sarabasab* that is my great favorite. I think if more people tried it they'd agree with me. There are eel in the upland rivers and cooked *adobado*, which is very special. There are also crayfish as large as lobsters that are a great delicacy. I like to follow my Dad's example of healthy eating, but I still find it hard to turn down good *bagnet*. That, with KBL salad, *diningding* or *pakbet*, and some red upland rice and you have a fine Ilocano meal! Add some good *basi* or *duhat* wine and you're sorted."

What he thinks makes Ilokano food a class of its own and what makes it so different:

"Like any regional cuisine, the dishes are based on traditional local produce. Ours is based on vegetables, fish and rice. It leans more to the salty side of the taste spectrum and is generally saucy rather than dry. Because of the demands of farmers and fisher folk, many dishes are stewed and improve with a little time. Slow food at its simplest! Ultimately, it's good, hearty peasant food, which has evolved into some very fine cuisine in the hands of our cooks."

Lastly, what Ilokano dish he cooks and his recipe:

"I'm very proud of my *pinakbet*!"

The Gov's Pakbet and his secrets to success

¼ c oil
1 c *liempo*, cut into ½-inch pieces
3 pcs each small *ampalaya* and eggplant (there are ampalayas and eggplants specifically for *pinakbet*)
5 pcs okra
5 pcs long beans, *sitaw*, cut into pieces
1 c squash, cubed
4 tomatoes, wedged
1 onion, wedged
3 tbsp bagoong alamang
4 cloves garlic, pounded
2 thin slices of ginger

(I cook *pakbet* like ratatouille; I cook each vegetable separately until it's just right, finally combining everything with the onion, garlic, tomato, ginger and *bagoong* base.)

Sauté string beans to desired doneness. Put aside. Do the same for *ampalaya* (previously sweated with salt to soften bitterness, then washed) and the rest of the vegetables except eggplants.

Boil *liempo* in a few tablespoons of water to render fat (I know, I know). When water is almost gone and pork is cooked, add oil, chopped tomatoes, garlic, ginger and *bagoong*.

Add eggplant. When almost done, add the rest of the vegetables and cook together. When thoroughly heated, serve.

("*Bagnet* is an option except that I always use it.") *Bagnet* chopped into ½ to 1-inch pieces is sprinkled on top of the finished dish. You can fry the chopped *bagnet* before sprinkling to make it very crunchy.

There's no real trick to it but to use the freshest vegetables from the garden. If you have the luxury, try it with baby vegetables. Also, make sure that the *bagoong alamang* has been washed clean.

Finally, the worst thing you can do to good vegetables is to overcook them.

Reader query

How do you make the perfect *bagnet* and Ilocos *longganisa*? For the lazy cook that I sometimes am, where's the place to buy these in Metro Manila?

CHIT

Where in Manila? Good question! I've seen them around but never really found them to be as authentic in flavor as those we get from there. So may I just give you the recipes?

Bagnet:

1 k pork belly, whole
1/3 c crushed garlic
1 bay leaf
1 tbsp salt
1 tsp whole peppercorn
MSG (optional)

Combine ingredients in a pan and fill with enough water to submerge pork. Boil until tender. Dry out pork: Sun dry or turn oven on to warm and let sit in the oven for 3 hours on the lowest rack. Drying times may vary. Sometimes, I don't even dry my *bagnet* out. I think it still tastes good. However, frying it for an hour is necessary.

Heat 8 cups of oil 300°F, add *bagnet* and deep fry. Adjust heat to low and fry for 1 hour. Meat must be submerged in oil. Drain on paper towels, and you can now freeze your *bagnet*, slice and re-fry before serving.

Longganiza:

1 k ground pork (70-percent lean meat; 30-percent fat)
1 tbsp minced garlic
1 ½ tbsp coarse salt
½ tsp meat binder (MGM Food Corp. tel. 5336201)
¼ tsp MSG
1 ½ tbsp soy sauce
1 ½ tbsp native vinegar
½ tsp pepper

Mix ingredients. Stuff ground pork to casing (intestines-MGM). Tie into desired sizes. Sun dry. Fry until golden brown. If you want to learn how to make all kinds of longganisa and sausages, call Sylvia Reynoso at 6714498 or 6714472.

***

For those who sent text messages asking about Pagudpud, call these beach resorts—Arinaya 0918-351-3507, Saud 0920-270-6075, Terarika 0919-496-1675, Panzian 0919-343-9354, Villa del Mar 0919-899-5673.

***

And if you're making that trip to Ilocos, pass by Vilmar and buy their Gatas ng Kalabaw Pastillas. Excellent! Vilmar is in Tarlac, along the national highway!

I'm teaching my favorite Spanish and pork chop recipes. See you!

For comments or suggestions, text 0917-8399888.

Gourmet Classes with Chef Dennis Hipolito
#137 9th Street corner Balete Drive, New Manila, Quezon City

June 4, 2005: SPECIAL BARS AND COOKIES (New Bars and Cookies for Gift Giving) NEW CLASS Fudge Filled Oatmeal Chocolate Chip Cookies, Cheesecake Swirl Fudge Cookies, Café Au Lait Caramel Biscotti, Surprise Cheese Cookies, Oatmeal Caramel Bars-P1600
June 11, 2005: SINFUL CHOCOLATE* GOODIES (Simple Chocolate Indulgences) NEW CLASS Decadent Chocolate Turtle Cake, Bailey's Chocolate Fudge Loaf, marshmallow and Oreo Brownies, Chocolate and Walnut Torte -P1600 *Using Callebaut Chocolates
June 18, 2005: CRAZY ABOUT NUTS (A Delectable Array of Goodies with Nuts) NEW CLASS Sinful Mudslide Cookies, Butter Pecan Cream Cake, In a Hurry Gooey Bars, Italian Amaretti Cookies, Almond Linzer Cookies-P1600
June 25, 2005: SENSATIONAL BREADS (A Selection of Irresistible Breads) NEW CLASS Puff Pastry Chicken Empanada, Apple Turnovers, Stuffed Yeasted Banana Bread, Coiled Olive and Garlic Bread, Roasted Onion and Garlic Cheese Bread-P1600
*CLASSES ARE: 1:00PM-4:30PM, (Limited Seats Available)
*Classes include: Ingredients, Recipe Hand Outs, and Product Shares. *For Inquiries and Reservations: Please call or text **0917-8486656** or email us at gourmetpastry@aol.com. LOOK for **GIRARD** or **YVETTE**.

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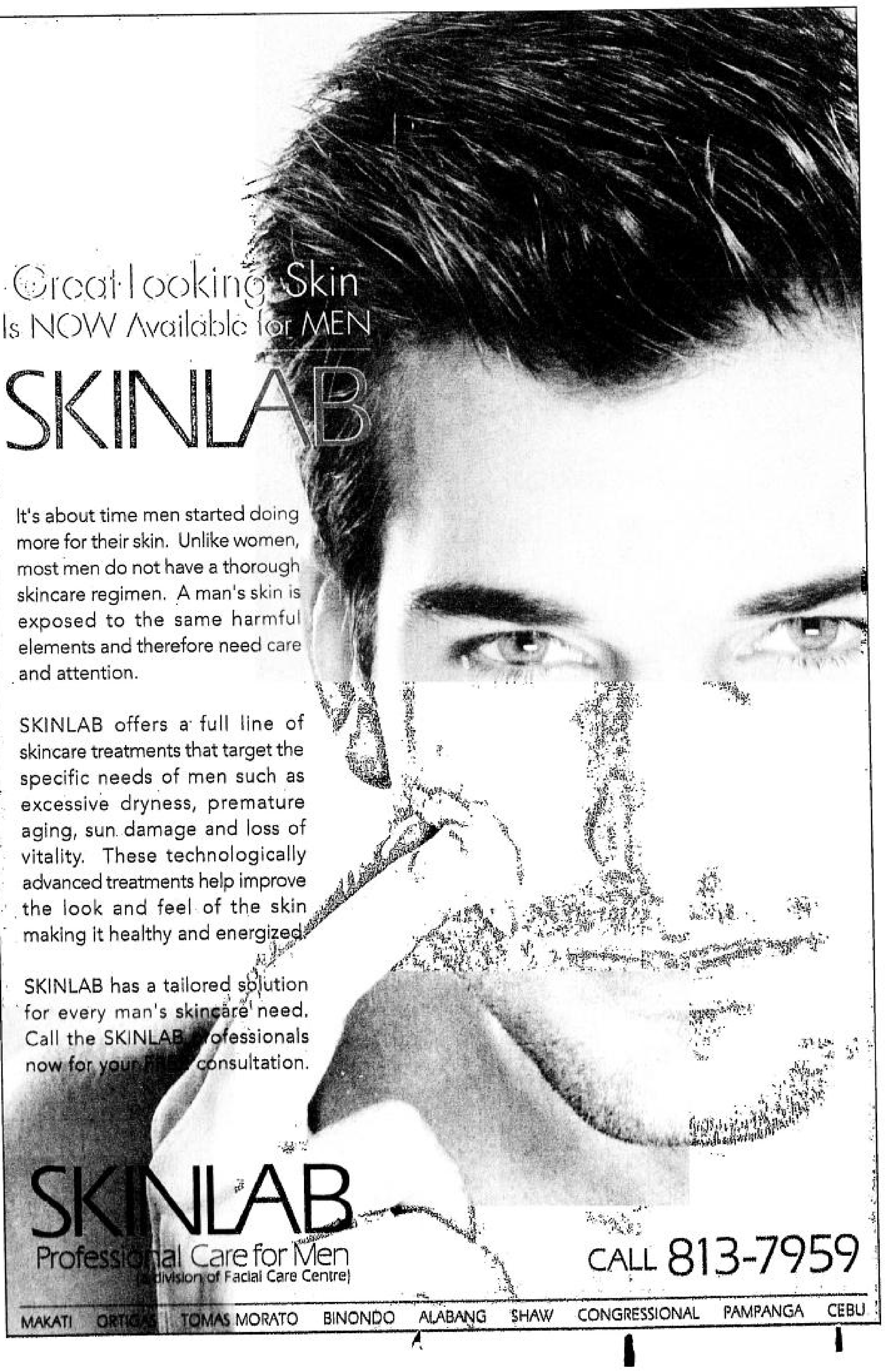

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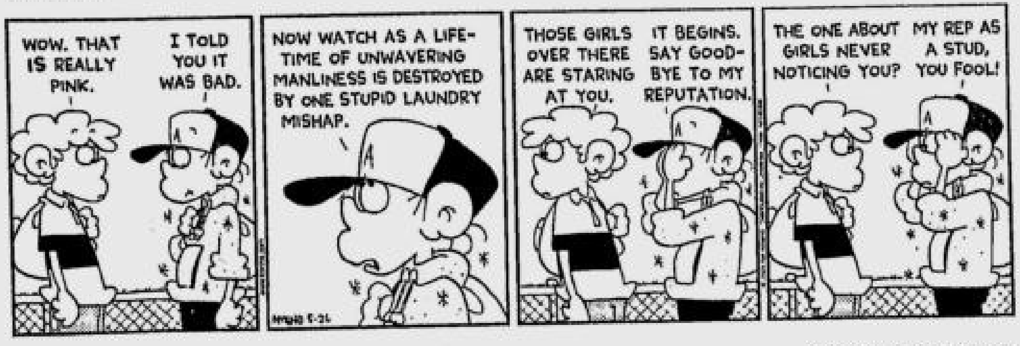
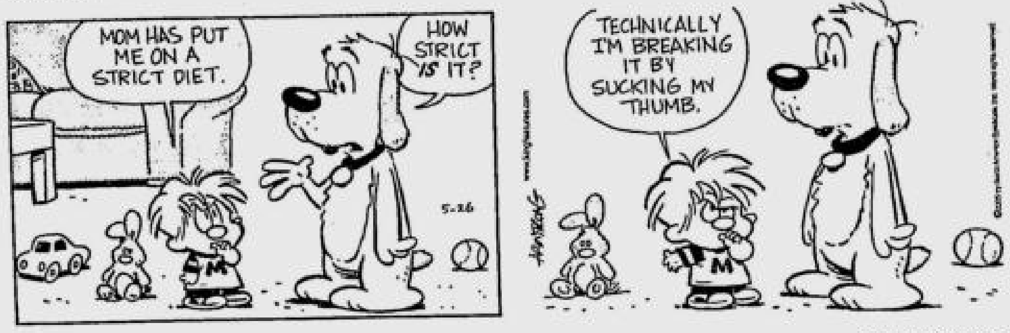
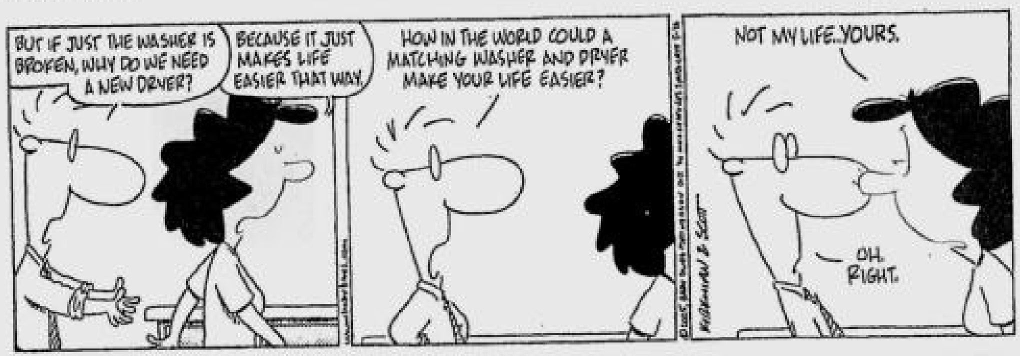

WOW. THAT IS REALLY PINK.
I TOLD YOU IT WAS BAD.
NOW WATCH AS A LIFE-TIME OF UNWAVERING MANLINESS IS DESTROYED BY ONE STUPID LAUNDRY MISHAP.
THOSE GIRLS OVER THERE ARE STARING AT YOU.
IT BEGINS. SAY GOOD-BYE TO MY REPUTATION.
THE ONE ABOUT GIRLS NEVER NOTICING YOU?
MY REP AS A STUD, YOU FOOL!

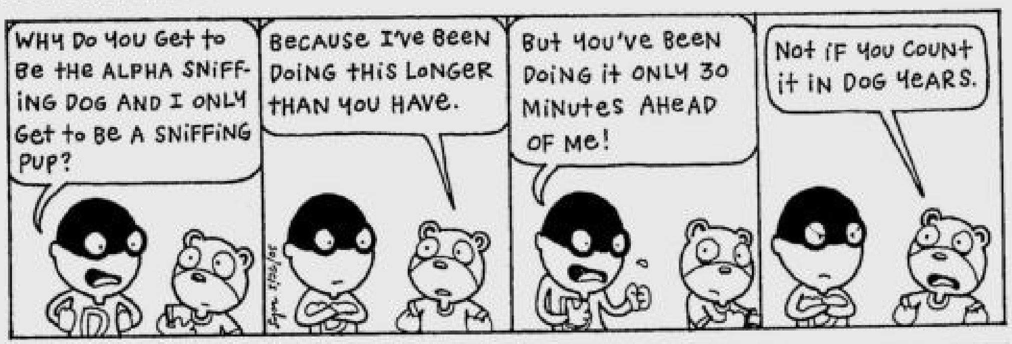
MARVIN BY TOM ARMSTRONG


MOM HAS PUT ME ON A STRICT DIET.
HOW STRICT IS IT?
5-26
TECHNICALLY I'M BREAKING IT BY SUCKING MY THUMB.

BABY BLUES BY JERRY SCOTT


BUT IF JUST THE WASHER IS BROKEN, WHY DO WE NEED A NEW DRYER?
BECAUSE IT JUST MAKES LIFE EASIER THAT WAY.
HOW IN THE WORLD COULD A MATCHING WASHER AND DRYER MAKE YOUR LIFE EASIER?
NOT MY LIFE...YOURS.
OH. RIGHT.

ATOMO AND WEBOY BY LYRA GARCELLANO


WHY DO YOU GET TO BE THE ALPHA SNIFF-ING DOG AND I ONLY GET TO BE A SNIFFING PUP?
BECAUSE I'VE BEEN DOING THIS LONGER THAN YOU HAVE.
BUT YOU'VE BEEN DOING IT ONLY 30 MINUTES AHEAD OF ME!
NOT IF YOU COUNT IT IN DOG YEARS.

HOROSCOPE

BY FRANCIS DRAKE

YOU BORN TODAY: You're very honorable. You have high ideals and strong morals. You not only promote them; you live them yourself. You're also very protective when it comes to others, especially your family. Warmhearted, you are often a defender of the underdog. This year focuses on partnerships and your closest relationships.
Birthdate of: Pam Grier, actress; Stevie Nicks, singer; John Wayne, actor.

ARIES (March 21 to April 19): A discussion with your boss or possibly with a parent could be important today. The subject matter is serious. One thing is certain: You want to make a good impression.

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20): You can get a lot done today dealing with publishing, higher education, the media, medicine and the law. You might also be concerned about travel plans or someone who is far away. Just do what you can.

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20): People might ask for your advice, because with the Sun and Venus in your sign now, you're strong and energetic! Just be forthright and honest.

CANCER (June 21 to July 22): Today's Moon opposes your sign. This sometimes makes you a bit attracted to somebody. Nevertheless, everyone feels a bit shy and reserved today.

LEO (July 23 to Aug. 22): You will do a good job at work today because you want respect for what you do. Today you seem to be more aware of the opinion of others.

VIRGO (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22): This is a good day to discuss the responsibilities connected with raising children or working with children. Similarly, work connected to show business and the entertainment world will be productive.

LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22): Focus your attention on home, family, real estate and your dealings with parents today. Sometimes it's good to observe traditional customs. (People know where they stand.)

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21): There's a mild tendency to be worried or depressed today. Everyone feels it. Fortunately, it's gone in a matter of hours! (Thank goodness.)

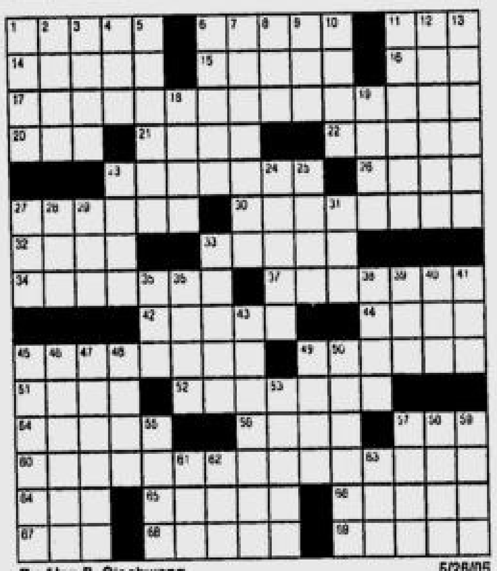
SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21): You might be worried about money or feel you don't have enough finances to swing something, perhaps even swing the basics! This is a passing dark cloud on your horizon. Relax.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19): The Moon is in your sign today, making you a bit more emotional and sensitive. The good news is that when the Moon is in your sign, it brings you a bit of luck!

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18): You've been working hard and partying at the same time. You can't go on like this forever. This is a good day to pull in your reins a bit and rest. Just work behind the scenes.

PISCES (Feb. 19 to March 20): A conversation with a friend could be very meaningful to you. A feeling of mutual sympathy could arise. (You'll find this reassuring in a familiar way.)

DAILY CROSSWORD



By Alan P. Olschwang
Huntington Beach, CA
5/26/05

ACROSS
1 Son of Abraham
6 'Rush, Rush' singer Paula
11 Winter hrs. in L.A.
14 Cinematic swordsman
15 Go-ahead
16 So it's you!
17 Start of Judy Castrina quote
20 "Citizen Kane" studio
21 2002
22 Gets dirty
23 Part 2 of quote
26 Campbell of 'Scream'
27 Oval nuts
30 Moderated
32 Bradley or Sharif
33 City north of Roma
34 Part 3 of quote
37 Part 4 of quote
42 Nautical greetings
44 Whittle
45 Soak in wine
49 Wanton
51 Copies
52 Part 5 of quote
54 Phrygian king of myth
56 Radiation units
57 Small drink
60 End of quote
64 Top pilot
65 White heron
66 Hautboys
67 Elected off. in Washington
68 Zounds!
69 Location of Xigaze and Gyangze

DOWN
1 Muslim woman's gown
2 Slug
3 Buck's tail?
4 Appendage
5 Kind of cold?
6 Up and about
7 Plain-woven fabric
8 Coloring agent
9 Bring into play
10 Scads
11 Slower
12 Put aside
13 Flung
18 Stem competitor
19 First-rate
23 Mata __
24 Contract components
25 Potent beginning?
27 Dad
28 Cassowary cousin
29 Cool one
31 Wrestling feat
33 Fang
35 Bert Bobbsey's twin
36 Annual melt
38 Informed about
39 Seasoned sailor
40 Historical period
41 SSS word
43 Pined
45 Poisonous African snakes
46 Each
47 Flush
48 Senior PGA golfer Aoki
49 Summit
50 Good luck source
53 Experiments
55 Koko's weapon
57 Elitist
58 __ fixe
59 Hey, look over here!
61 Poultry product
62 Pension $
63 Kimono sash

Wednesday's Puzzle Solved

D	A	B	S	■	P	A	L	L	■	A	D	D	I	S
E	L	L	A	■	A	L	O	E	■	G	O	O	D	E
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S	E	W	A	R	D	■	E	C	O	■	J	E	S	T
■	■	■	M	E	E	T	■	H	O	B	O	■	■	■
C	C	V	I	■	M	A	H	■	T	E	N	O	R	S
R	O	I	■	A	I	R	E	S	■	A	E	R	I	E
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■	■	■	A	R	A	L	■	S	O	S	A	■	■	■
C	O	I	T	■	P	E	P	■	L	E	S	A	G	E
U	N	D	E	R	T	H	E	W	E	A	T	H	E	R
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P	O	L	Y	P	■	R	E	N	T	■	R	E	S	T

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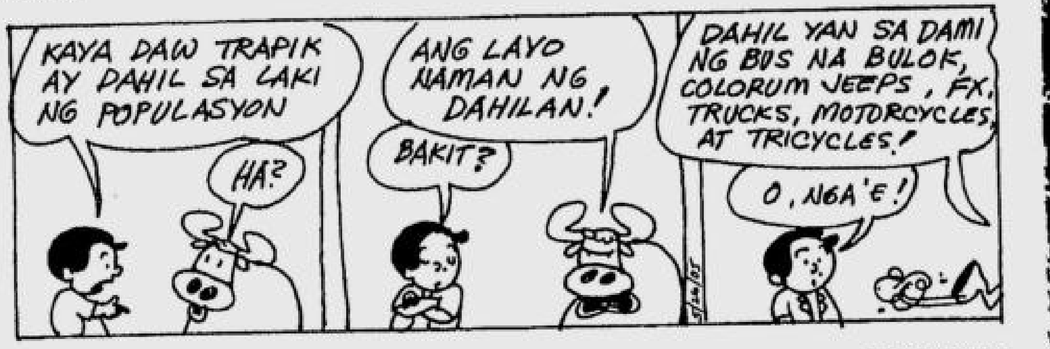
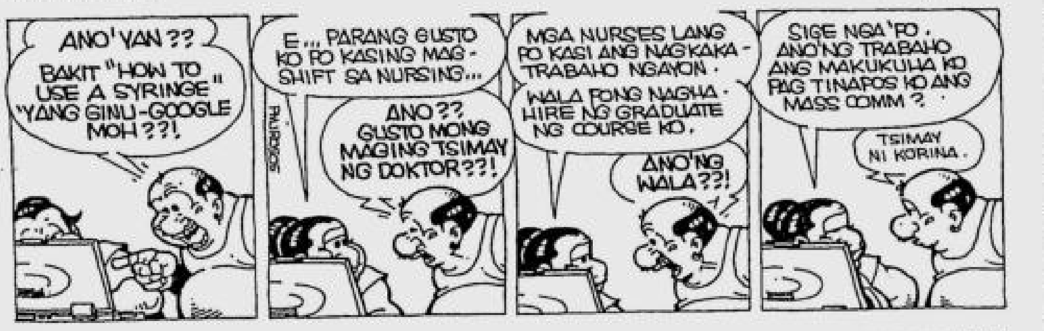
5/26/05

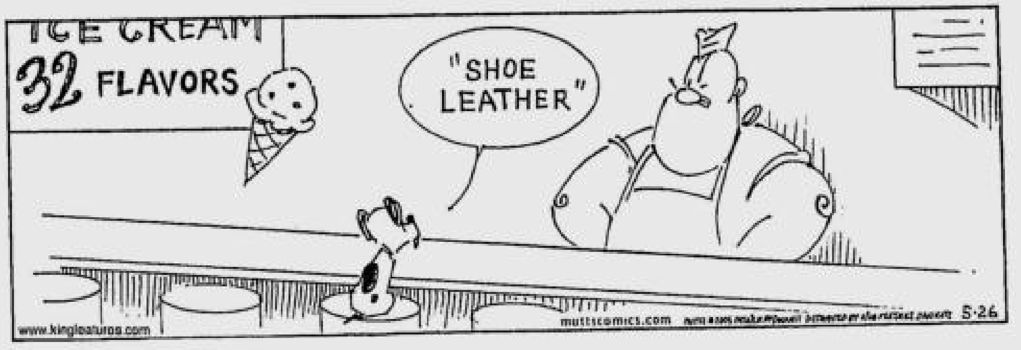
A. LIPIN BY JESS ABRERA


KAYA DAW TRAPIK AY DAHIL SA LAKI NG POPULASYON
HA?
ANG LAYO NAMAN NG DAHILAN!
BAKIT?
DAHIL YAN SA DAMI NG BUS NA BULOK, COLORUM JEEPS, FX, TRUCKS, MOTORCYCLES, AT TRICYCLES!
O, NGA'E!

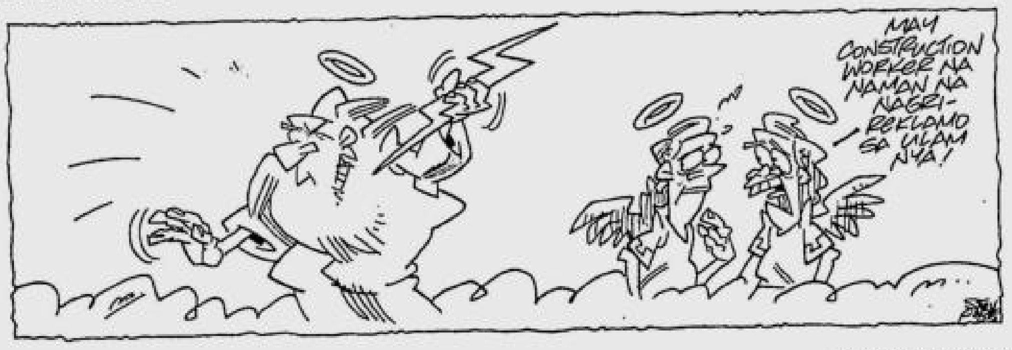
PUGAD BABOY BY P.M. JUNIOR


ANO' YAN??
BAKIT "HOW TO USE A SYRINGE" 'YANG GINU-GOOGLE MOH??!
E... PARANG GUSTO KO PO KASING MAG-SHIFT SA NURSING...
ANO?? GUSTO MONG MAGING TSIMAY NG DOKTOR??!
MGA NURSES LANG PO KASI ANG NAGKAKA-TRABAHO NGAYON.
WALA PONG NAGHA-HIRE NG GRADUATE NG COURSE KO.
ANO'NG WALA??!
SIGE NGA PO. ANO'NG TRABAHO ANG MAKUKUHA KO PAG TINAPOS KO ANG MASS COMM?
TSIMAY NI KORINA.

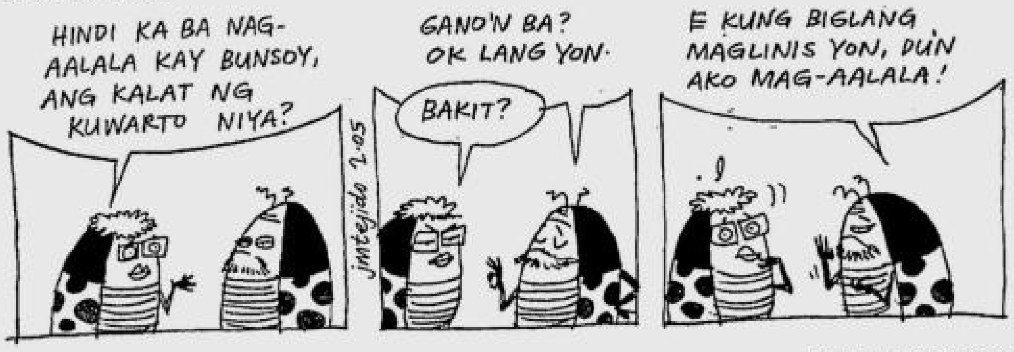
MUTTS BY PATRICK McDONNELL


ICE CREAM
32 FLAVORS
"SHOE LEATHER"
www.kingfeatures.com
mutts comics.com
5-26

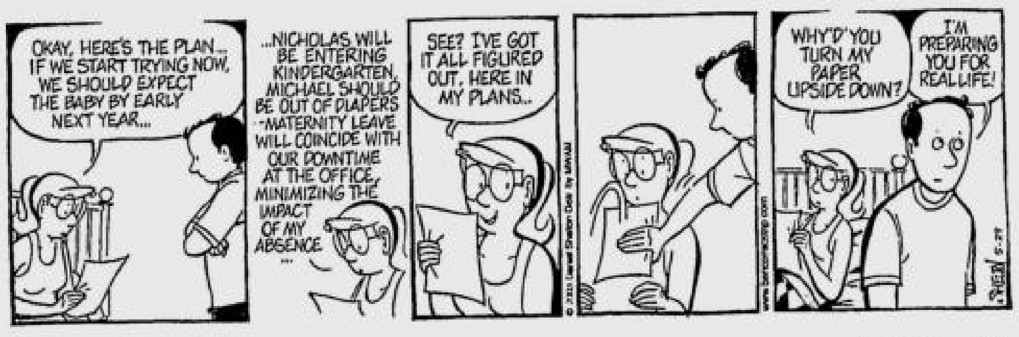
DIVINE COMEDY BY STEVEN PABALINAS


MAY CONSTRUCTION WORKER NA NAMAN NA NAGRI-REKLAMO SA ULAM NIYA!

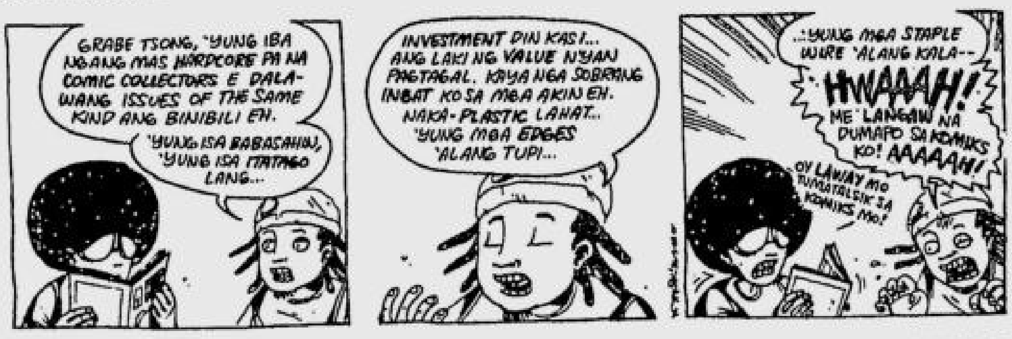
MIKROKOSMOS BY JOMIKE TEJIDO


HINDI KA BA NAG-AALALA KAY BUNSOY, ANG KALAT NG KUWARTO NIYA?
GANO'N BA? OK LANG YON.
BAKIT?
E KUNG BIGLANG MAGLINIS YON, DUN AKO MAG-AALALA!
jmtejido 2.05

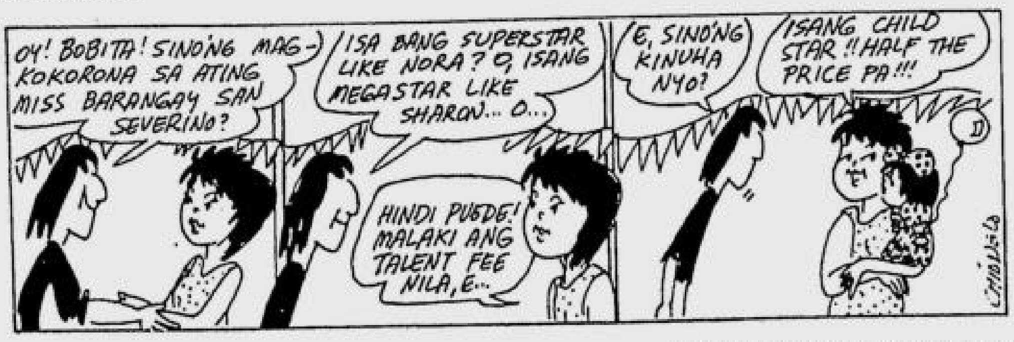
BEN BY DANIEL SHELTON


OKAY, HERE'S THE PLAN... IF WE START TRYING NOW, WE SHOULD EXPECT THE BABY BY EARLY NEXT YEAR...
...NICHOLAS WILL BE ENTERING KINDERGARTEN, MICHAEL SHOULD BE OUT OF DIAPERS --MATERNITY LEAVE WILL COINCIDE WITH OUR DOWNTIME AT THE OFFICE, MINIMIZING THE IMPACT OF MY ABSENCE...
SEE? I'VE GOT IT ALL FIGURED OUT. HERE IN MY PLANS...
WHY'D YOU TURN MY PAPER UPSIDE DOWN?
I'M PREPARING YOU FOR REAL LIFE!

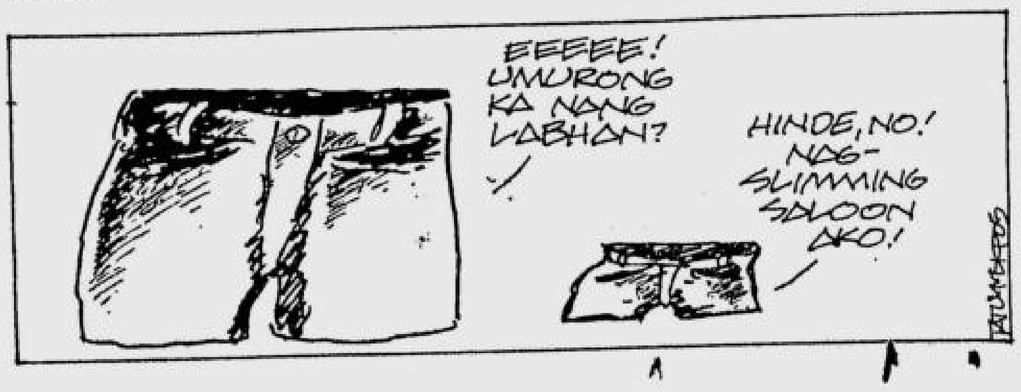
KIKO MACHINE BY MANIX ABRERA


GRABE TSONG, 'YUNG IBA NGANG MAS HARDCORE PA NA COMIC COLLECTORS E DALAWANG ISSUES OF THE SAME KIND ANG BINIBILI EH.
'YUNG ISA BABASAHIN, 'YUNG ISA ITATAGO LANG...
INVESTMENT DIN KASI... ANG LAKI NG VALUE NYAN PAGTAGAL. KAYA NGA SOBRANG INGAT KO SA MGA AKIN EH. NAKA-PLASTIC LAHAT... 'YUNG MGA EDGES 'ALANG TUPI...
...'YUNG MGA STAPLE WIRE 'ALANG KALA--
HWAAAH!
ME LANGAW NA DUMAPO SA KOMIKS KO! AAAAAH!
OY LAWAY MO TUMATALSIK SA KOMIKS MO!

LOVEKNOTS BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO


OY! BOBITA! SINO'NG MAG-KOKORONA SA ATING MISS BARANGAY SAN SEVERINO?
ISA BANG SUPERSTAR LIKE NORA? O, ISANG MEGASTAR LIKE SHARON... O...
HINDI PUEDE! MALAKI ANG TALENT FEE NILA, E...
E, SINO'NG KINUHA NYO?
ISANG CHILD STAR!! HALF THE PRICE PA!!!
CHIONGLO

TULDOK BY PAPU AND TATUM MILAMBILING


EEEEE! UMURONG KA NANG LABHAN?
HINDE, NO! NAG-SLIMMING SALOON AKO!
TATUMBATOS

Heat bothers consumers in more ways than one

THE CONSUMER

Marietta Velasco Giron

THAT was quite a relief to hear from Pag-asa (Philippine Atmospheric and Geophysical Administration) that the downpour last weekend may soon usher in the rainy season, and the end of the extreme heat.

We consumers are taking such a beating from the terrible heat. Everywhere we go, most air-conditioning systems can hardly cope with the high temperatures. Food poisoning is on the rise and utility bills are soaring.

Our mailbox is full of complaints about the discomfort they are suffering from the heat, especially when things don't work.

Reader Noel Ona, for example, complained some weeks ago that only the blowers at Cinema 5 of Robinsons Metro East mall seemed to be working during the screening of the film "Robots." It was supposed to be a cool treat for his son's birthday, and the whole family was there to enjoy the movie.

Thinking the situation was a one-off, two days later he and his wife went to see "Hostage" at Cinema 6, only to find that the air-conditioning system had malfunctioned again.

"The cinema management should at least post a signboard informing customers about the air-conditioning system," Ona said.

Spoiled food

We also received two complaints about spoiled grocery items: a popular orange drink with molds under the caps and a pack of "sticky" cooked ham. Unfortunately, the consumers are not filing any complaints.

"I just want to warn other consumers not to buy from grocery stores with air-conditioning systems and freezers that cannot cope with the summer heat," one of the complainants wrote.

Ruined film

Kristina (luvly_kris@yahoo.com) wants to know if a photo shop is liable for destroying a customer's film. A roll of film with shots of her travels was ruined during processing at a photo shop at SM Bicutan. The store clerk admitted the trouble was caused by their machine and offered to replace the roll of film.

"The sad part was, we spent time and money traveling to places. We cannot recapture those memorable (images) anymore," she wrote.

We asked the consumer information desk of the Department of Trade and Industry and was informed that the store "is only under obligation to replace the spoiled film, but an aggrieved customer is free to file a legal complaint against the erring shop." The complainant has to hire a private lawyer, the DTI desk added.

For more information on similar cases, call DTI consumer welfare desk at 8977384.

SM explains

E-mail from Charo of Quezon City: "My family and I have been old customers of ShoeMart. Lately, however, when we use our Gold SCBC, Citibank and AIG credit cards at the department store, it is quite embarrassing and inconvenient to be asked by cashiers to present some form of identification. They do that even for a P200 purchase. We use our credit cards in other establishments here and abroad and have never been required to present IDs."

Here's the reply of SM's store operations group to the complaint: "The only reason (cashiers) would ask for ID for credit card transactions is if the card was not signed by the owner. As per bank regulations, when there are purchases P5,000 and above, a call is made to the bank for verification, but no ID is required. All these procedures are requirements of the card company, which we are implementing. We will also get in touch with the customer to further clarify (matters)."

Rude civil servant

Here's a reminder to government clerks not to be rude to callers. Their victims could file formal charges against them. Take the case of a clerk at the Bureau of Food and Drug who is now being asked by BFAD Director Leticia Gutierrez to respond to a complaint lodged by a consumer.

Consumer R. Harper of the Philippine Maritime Archaelogical Foundation, Inc. complained that the clerk was "rude, arrogant and sarcastic."

She called BFAD last May 5 to ask how she could contact the manufacturer of a brand of fresh soya milk. She wanted to know if she could get replacement for the two bottles of spoiled soya milk at a market near her place.

The clerk, according to Harper, replied with sarcasm and arrogance when she asked if she had called the right office.

By the way, Harper is not satisfied with the way her complaint is being dealt with. She wrote, "I received a copy of a BFAD order requiring...the uncouth employee to submit her counter affidavit within three days. If I understand it right, I'm then supposed to comment on her affidavit? Is this the beginning of (red tape)?"

E-mail the author at giron@ mailstation. nettion.net

The Maya Kitchen
CULINARY ARTS CENTER

FLAVORS OF HERBS AND SPICES

Maya Kitchen introduces novices to the world of herbs and spices, with global perspective, lots of interesting tidbits on the history and insight of the flavors on how herbs and spices are traditionally used. A fact-filled and entertaining class tells what herbs and spices best complement meats, chicken, vegetables, fish and other mouth-watering recipes. Spice up your favorite meals and enroll now!

Cooking with Herbs & Spices: May 28 (Sat) 9 a.m. - 2 p.m. Classification of different usage of fresh and dry herbs and spices; Pesto Sauces: basil, cilantro; Herbed Butter: Chili Paprika, Cafe de Paris, Flavored Vinegar: Tarragon and Dill; Flavored oil: chili and paprika; curried smoked fish rice, cream of carrot and dill soup, egg pasta in Saffron sauce, braised beef shank with cilantro sauce, poached chicken with romaine salad and cinnamon apple, cumin and coriander buttered fish P1,000.

Baking with Mixes: May 28 (Sat) 2 - 5 p.m. Brownies (Rocky Road, Black Forest), Decadence Brownie Chocolate Muffins with Fudge Frosting; Butterscotch Squares, Banana Loaf, Pineapple Carrot Cake, Food for the Gods. P750.

Traditional Japanese Recipes: June 4 (Sat) 9 a.m. - 1 p.m. Miso Soup, Mixed Tempura, Sukiyaki, Kamameshi; assorted sushi: Kappamaki, Tekamaki, California Maki and Nigiri. P1,000 with free cookbook.

Gulaman Delights: June 4 (Sat) 1:30 - 5 p.m. Cathedral Window, Almond Gulaman Taho and Cooler, Buko Pandan Jello, Fruity Chewy Salad, Coffee Mousse. P600.

Rice Toppings with home processed meat curing: June 11 (Sat) 9 a.m. - 1 p.m. Tapa Tips Garlic Rice, Native Longanisa Adobo Rice, Tocino Pineapple Rice, Tinapa Bagoong Rice, Crispy Corned Beef Kasubha Rice, Sweet & Sour Pork Parsleyed Rice, Tofu Teriyaki Rice. P1,000.

Pambaon Snacks: June 11 (Sat) 1:30 - 5 p.m. Nutri-deli Muffins, Crusted Beef Burger, Cheese Calzone, Fruity Chicken Sandwich. Free Snacks & Baon cookbook. P800.

Italian Sampler: June 18 (Sat) 9 a.m. - 1 p.m. Lasagna, Cannelloni, Ravioli, assorted pasta and sauces, Spaghetti Carbonara, Putlanesca Penne and Pesto Linguini. P800.

Pinoy Breads: June 18 (Sat) 1:30 - 5 p.m. Pandesal, Ensaymada, Spanish Bread, Bichu-Bichu, Mongo Bread, Raisin Loaf. P600.

CERTIFICATE COURSES WITH HANDS-ON (Limited enrolment. Pre-registration required.)

Cake Decorating (Basic): May 28 & June 4 (Sat) 9 a.m. - 4 p.m. Lecture-workshop on fundamentals of cake decorating: coloring, designing, template, icing (boiled, butter, caramel, chocolate, sugar icing);basic borders, jelly lettering, basic flower making, bunching. P3,000.

Cooking I: May 31 - June 1-3 or June 14-17 (T-F) 8:30 a.m. - 1:30 p.m. Proper hygiene, sanitation and safety; Nutrition and Nutritional Cooking; stocks, soups and sauces and its 1001 application to poultry, fish, shellfish, fruits and vegetables; common herbs and spices; purchasing; marketing and proper storage; menu planning; simple garnish and plate presentation. Plus actual cooking workshop on the preparation of dishes from appetizer to dessert. P4,000.

Baking I: May 31 - June 1-3 or June 14-17 (T-F) 2:00 - 5:30 p.m. Basic basics of baking including techniques applied to preparation of bread, quickbread, pies, cakes and more. P3,000 with free cookbook.

Cooking 2: June 7-10 (T-F) 8:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m. Review of Basic Culinary Principles; Meal Management; Knowledge of Herbs, Spices & Condiments; Basic Maintenance & Preservation of Food (Proper Receiving, Storage & Preparation); Menu Planning, Kitchen Accounting & Recipe Formulation; Actual Workshop on International Cuisine, Ethnic Cooking, Hors d'oeuvre, Salad, Cooked/Cured/Prepared food and Quick Desserts; Market Basket Activity. Free Mix & Match 3 cookbook. P5,000.

Baking 2: June 7-10 (T-F) 2:00 - 5:30 p.m. Baking ingredients and their functions, baker's percentage / math, commercial methods used in preparing breads, pies, cakes, pastries and bakery products including costing, batching applicable to bakery operation. P3,000.

Waitering & Bartending Basics: June 11 & 18 (Sat) 9 a.m. - 4 p.m. Basic setup, napkin folding & skirting, wine and spirits classification, mixing and serving drinks. P2,500.

Japanese Cooking: June 21-23 (T-Th) 2 - 6 p.m. Coverage: Chicken Saute in Anchovy Sauce, Japanese Hamburger Onion Sauce, Mixed Mushroom Omelet, Chicken Katsu with Cheese, Pumpkin Croquettes, Tuna Gratin, Chicken Cream Stew, Rolled Cabbage with Meat Fish, Dry Curry Rice, Macaroni Salad, Steam Chicken Salad, Sweet & Sour Pork Japanese Style, Sauteed Pork & Cabbage with Miso, Ham & Potato Curry, Steamed Chicken with Goma Sesame Sauce, Japanese Fried Chicken, Japanese Crab Omelet, Ground Beef with Lettuce Tsutsumi Wrap, Shrimp Wonton Soup Japanese Style, Grilled Tofu with Ground Pork by Chef Seiji Kamura. P5,000.

For inquiries, visit the Maya Kitchen (Tuesdays thru Saturdays) at 8th floor, Liberty Building, A. Arnaiz Ave. (Pasay Road), Makati City or call tel. 892-1185 or 892-5011 loc. 108; or e-mail us at *mkitchen@ultimate.info.com.ph*

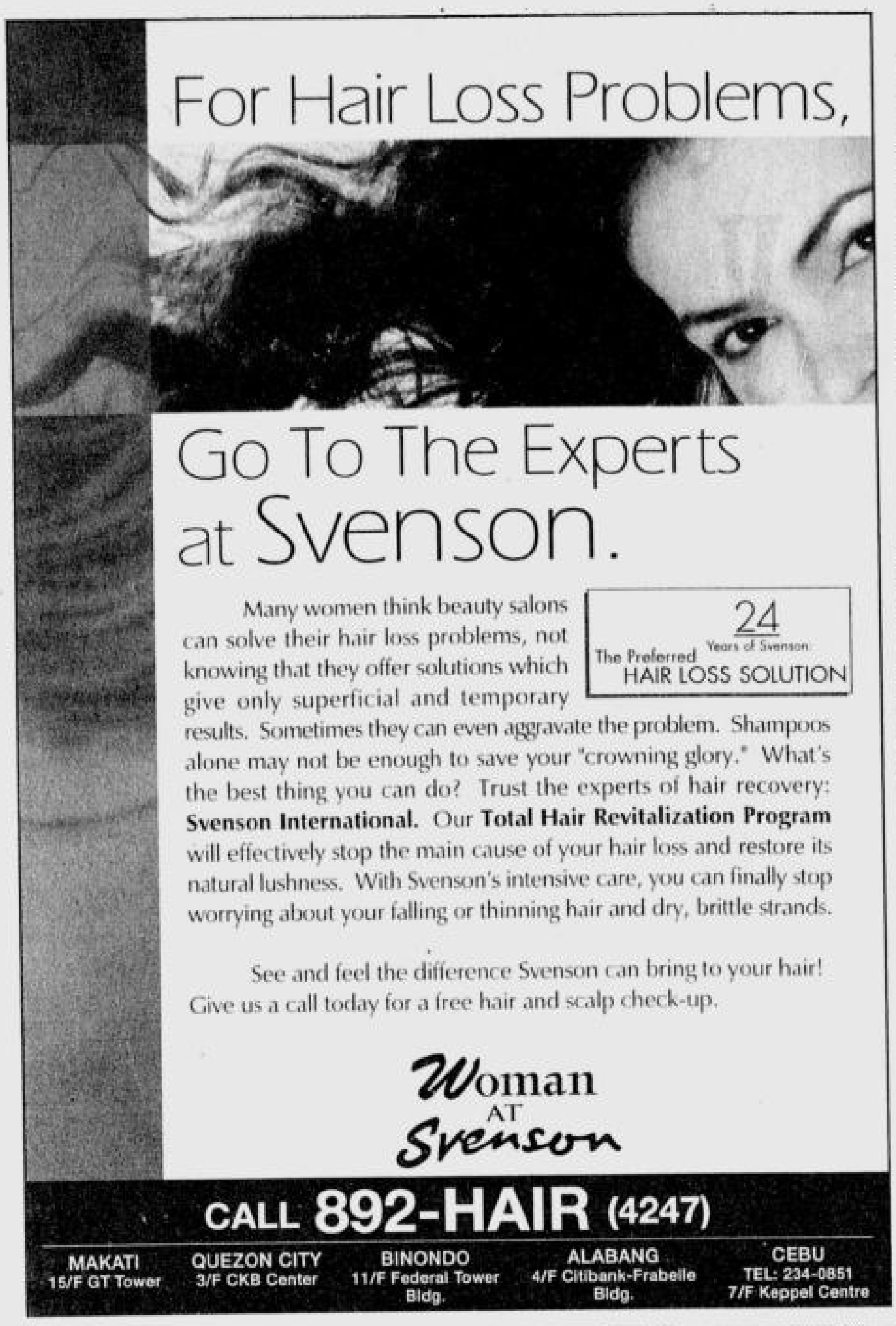
This year, **PINOY Plus Association** and **Remedios AIDS Foundation, Inc.,** is celebrating the 22nd International AIDS Candlelight Memorial differently. It will be through a book launching which aims to raise awareness and education about HIV/AIDS and how it impacts communities, people and societies. Publications for launching are : **"A Situational Analysis of HIV/AIDS Related Stigma and Discrimination in Manila, Philippines","Stigma and Discrimination : a living reality for people living with HIV/AIDS in the Philippines", " Time out! : caregivers unwind...","Moving on : coping with HIV/AIDS-related deaths"** to be held on 27 May 2005 at Powerbooks, Greenbelt, Makati. For details please call 524-0924/ 524-4831 and ask for Lucy or Genesis.

JUST SHOP'S Biggest Issue yet!
80 pages!
INQUIRER
JUST SHOP
Out this Friday, May 27
Nicole Hernandez

Bring on the School Spirit with JUST SHOP!

- GET THE LOOK: **Campus Star.** Learn to walk the halls of fashion fame with your own personal style.
- JUST SHOP PICKS the best back-to-school items from the **Robinsons Department Store** collection.
- Make a statement in casual tees that let you **SPEAK OUT!**
- BLING IT ON: Be an accessories wiz with **5 easy chic pieces** for fab back-to-school style!
- Tried and tested pointers from cover model and school muse, **Nicole Hernandez**.

• JUST SHOP magazine is given FREE to Inquirer subscribers in Metro Manila. If you want to be a subscriber, call 528-0183 or 527-3348.


For Hair Loss Problems,

Go To The Experts at Svenson.

24 Years of Svenson
The Preferred HAIR LOSS SOLUTION

Many women think beauty salons can solve their hair loss problems, not knowing that they offer solutions which give only superficial and temporary results. Sometimes they can even aggravate the problem. Shampoos alone may not be enough to save your "crowning glory." What's the best thing you can do? Trust the experts of hair recovery: **Svenson International.** Our **Total Hair Revitalization Program** will effectively stop the main cause of your hair loss and restore its natural lushness. With Svenson's intensive care, you can finally stop worrying about your falling or thinning hair and dry, brittle strands.

See and feel the difference Svenson can bring to your hair! Give us a call today for a free hair and scalp check-up.

Woman AT Svenson

CALL 892-HAIR (4247)

MAKATI	QUEZON CITY	BINONDO	ALABANG	CEBU
15/F GT Tower	3/F CKB Center	11/F Federal Tower Bldg.	4/F Citibank-Frabelle Bldg.	TEL: 234-0851 7/F Keppel Centre

Showcase of white asparagus

DINING OUT

THE PENINSULA Manila's Old Manila showcases the White Asparagus Festival until June 11. Included in the menu are Salad of White Asparagus with scallops, gambas, fragrant herbs and black truffle vinaigrette; Cassolette of White Asparagus with seared foie gras and port wine reduction; Cream of White Asparagus with tuna tartar and lemon oil; Breaded White Asparagus with slow roasted loin of veal, young spinach and quail egg mustard vinaigrette; Glazed White Asparagus with poached beef tenderloin, potato beignets and creamy snails; Fried White Asparagus with herbed salmon filet, glazed baby leeks and vanilla syrup; and White Asparagus Risotto with crispy barramundi and king prawns with morel cream. Call 8872888.

HYATT Regency Hotel Manila's Tempura Misono dishes out the Nippon interpretation of pizza for the whole month of June. Featured are Okonomiyake Pescatore, topped with mozzarella, salmon bits, maguro tuna slices and ika squid rings; Okonomiyake Milano, made with Italian salami, sausages, mozzarella, Japanese seaweed flakes and green spring onions; Okonomiyake Margarita, topped with fresh basil, mozzarella and tomatoes; Okonomiyake Prosciutto, made with Italian parma, porcini mushrooms and mozzarella. Call 8331234.

THE HERITAGE Hotel Manila's

INTERCONTINENTAL Manila's Café Jeepney presents Fiesta Pampagueña until May 31. The festival features hometown delicacies from the province of Pampanga such as Murcon, Longanisa, Tapang Kalabaw, Asadong Dila ng Baka, Pancit Luglog, Crispy Hito with Buro and Mustasa, Sisig Kapampangan, Mami and Tidtad Kapampangan, Tibok-Tibok, Sylvannas, Turrones de Casoy, Casuy Tarts and Marzipan, Tocino del Cielo and San Nicolas. Call 8159711.

Restaurant Riviera presents Malaysian cuisine on June 1-30. Featured are Rojak Salad, Chicken Satay, Beef Rendang, Nasi Lemak, Chicken Curry, Sweet and Sour Crabs, Roti Prata and Asam Laksa. Call 8548888.

DUSIT Hotel Nikko's Fiesta San Miguel features Roast Beef every Friday. Grab a slice of this tender and roasted US Angus Beef that comes with your choice of mashed potato, baked potato or fettuccini pasta and ponzu sauce or mushroom gravy. Call 8673333.

MERK'S features Bistro Remedios cuisine like Binukadkad na Pla Pla, Crispy Tadyang, Knockout Knuckles, Sugpo sa Aligue, Kare-Kareng Buntot ng Baka, Bicol Express and Pinakbet Kapampangan. Merk's is located at 3/L, Greenbelt 3, Ayala Center, Makati. Call 7574720/ 7574721.

EDSA Shangri-La offers new sweet treats. Paparazzi offers Tiramisu with coffee cream and Espresso Zabaglione, a mixture of egg yolks, sugar, wine and imported coffee, whipped in a copper pot. The Lobby Lounge's dessert selection includes Vanilla and Chocolate Brulée, Nougat, Homemade Fudge, Turkish Delight Tripod and Mango and Mascarpone Stack Pudding (above). Call 6338888.

chili's
Fun. Fresh. Flavorful.

CHILI'S Grill and Bar brings back Margarita Madness this month. Try its bottomless margaritas for only P300. You can choose from regular and flavored Margaritas, such as strawberry, mango, and strawberry-mango. As an added treat, sidekicks are given at 50-percent off when ordered together with margaritas. Promo is available daily, 7-11 p.m. Chili's outlets are at Greenbelt 1 in Makati; Northeast Greenhills; and Tomas Morato, QC.

For Spotless and Blemish-Free Skin

A Blemish Eraser That Really *Works!*

Picture-perfect skin can now be a reality with IPL Photorejuvenation Treatment. No other procedure has ever been developed that can accomplish so much with so little risk and downtime.

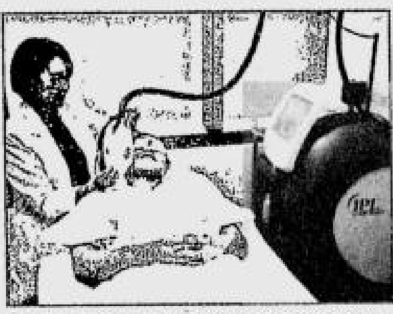
Janet Ley, enjoying her clear, flawless skin.

One satisfied client, Janet Ley, relates her happiness with IPL: "I like it. I really like it because after only my second treatment, my freckles are gone!"

IPL Photorejuvenation Treatment helps banish freckles, dark spots, and spider veins without a trace. According to Janet, "I believe my freckles became more prominent as I got older. So whenever I went out of the house, I would use face powder to cover them up. But now I don't use anything anymore because they're all gone! And now people would tell me that I have really nice, flawless skin."

IPL is a gentle, non-invasive treatment that uses a broad spectrum of light to treat the face, neck, chest, back, hands and virtually anywhere that sun damage or blemishes show. It uses the Intense Pulsed Light technology to correct a variety of skin conditions such as skin imperfections: freckles, skin discoloration, signs of ageing, age spots, unsightly spider veins, broken capillaries, rosacea and other blemishes. Facial Care Centre's Dr. Maria Isabelita Joya says, "IPL's amazing results include: better skin tone, reduced blotchiness, pigmentations and broken blood vessels, smoother surface texture and a more youthful-looking skin."

To restore an overall youthful look, IPL can simultaneously treat a wide variety of skin concerns safely and effectively. It erases skin damage with minor disruption on the skin's surface unlike other conventional treatments. As another satisfied client, Dr. Ariel Torres, would attest: "I'm an avid golfer so I'm very much exposed to the sun. That's how I had freckles. And I've tried every whitening product you can possibly think of: whitening cream, whitening lotion, sunblock, scrub, I even bought this thing from Hong Kong that you're supposed to drink to lighten your skin...nothing! It lightens up your skin for a while but you can't expose yourself to the sun anymore. And for avid players like me, that's totally unthinkable! So when I tried IPL, I was really impressed. Just after the first treatment, there were already visible, dramatic results! IPL is really the only treatment that worked for me."



Dr. Joya performing the IPL Photorejuvenation Treatment on a client.

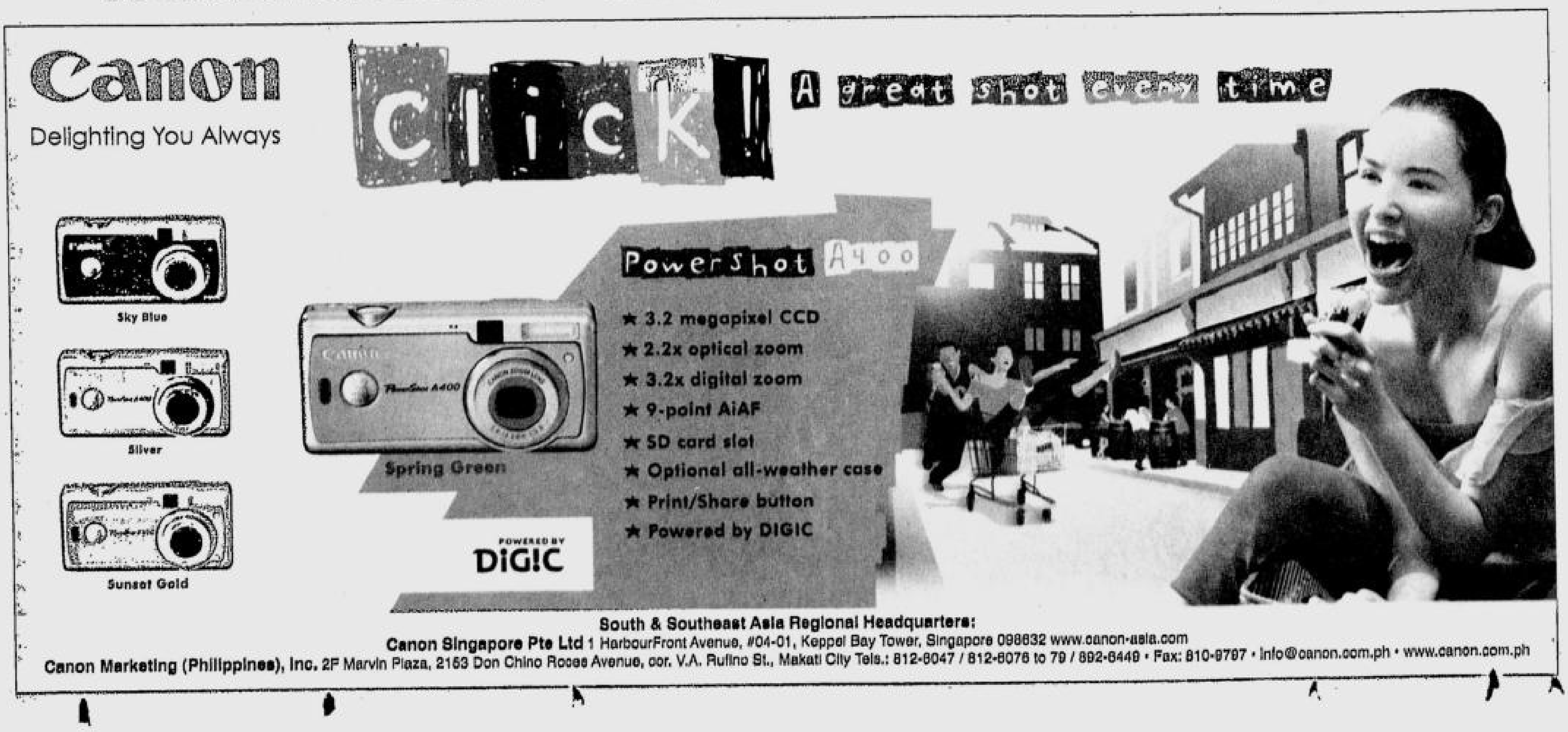
Another satisfied client, Dr. Ariel Torres.

Dr. Maria Isabelita Joya with the IPL machine.

Like Dr. Torres and Janet Ley, many satisfied clients have reported a reduction in age spots, freckles, and other skin discoloration. Most women who lead active and busy lifestyles are happy with the fact that aside from the visible improvement in their skin, they experience relatively no dowhtime. This means that one can actually have fairer, even-toned, glowing skin after approximately 30 minutes of treatment, and can go to work on the same day, as if nothing happened at all!

Now isn't this the best news for your skin?

To know more about IPL Photorejuvenation, just call Facial Care Centre at 892-SKIN. That's 892-7546.



- ★ 3.2 megapixel CCD
- ★ 2.2x optical zoom
- ★ 3.2x digital zoom
- ★ 9-point AiAF
- ★ SD card slot
- ★ Optional all-weather case
- ★ Print/Share button
- ★ Powered by DIGIC

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Canon Marketing (Philippines), Inc. 2F Marvin Plaza, 2153 Don Chino Roces Avenue, cor. V.A. Rufino St., Makati City Tels.: 812-6047 / 812-6076 to 79 / 892-6449 • Fax: 810-9797 • info@canon.com.ph • www.canon.com.ph

Pag May Respeto Sa Mamimili, Masaya Tayong Lahat.

Paggalang sa Mamimili: Resurgen

AdBoard Chairman Raul S. Alvarez, together with his lieutenants, the Officers and Board of Directors beam with pride and confidence as they rally the industry to the reawakened battlecry: Paggalang Sa Mamimili.

"With great power..."

There is no denying the power of advertising. Mass media wields a great influence over the attitudes, behavior and lifestyles of the Filipino. In Metro Manila, 8.5 out of 10 households have television sets, and 9 out of 10 own radios. The average Filipino watches television at an average of 4.5 hours a day. Of these hours, a significant time is allotted to commercial spots.

In the city, there is no escaping the bombardment of images and sound: radios blaring on commuter buses and jeepneys; piped-in music in the malls and restaurants; your neighbor's television or radio turned up full blast.

Along the wide yet congested thoroughfares, the clutter of billboards is becoming more evident. Every strategic inch and corner of our city streets – overpass, underpass, waiting shed, lamp post – has been covered. Even buses and MRT/LRT trains have become humongous moving ads.

Today's average household consists of the working father, the working mother, the busy yaya and the young child in front of the TV, taking onscreen fare for Bible truth. Children get their daily dose of morning cartoons, noontime babble, afternoon melodrama and early evening news interspersed with glitzy spoonfuls of commercials that portray larger-than-life lifestyles.

No doubt about it, advertising is powerful. Why else will it be a multi-billion-peso industry? Last year, companies spent a total of P113.26-billion to advertise their products and services.

According to data compiled by AC Nielsen, companies allocated 72 percent of their advertising media budget for television, followed by radio with 17 percent, and print with 10 percent. Television, long the favored medium, raked in P68.4 billion in airtime for commercials in 2004, up 24 percent from P55-billion in 2002. Media spending on radio totaled P16.4-billion, a 21-percent growth from P13.5 billion in 2002. Spending on print, on the other hand, grew by only 5 percent to P9.6 billion from P9.1 billion in 2003.

But in the quest to meet marketing goals, satisfy clients and achieve the bottom line, has the advertising industry overstepped the boundaries of ethics and good sense?

Think about it...

Today's advertising says a lot about what we value as a society.

In the race to market products and services in the mass media, many of our fundamental values have been left by the wayside. Honesty, selflessness, pride in our Filipino individuality, love of country, respect for self and respect for our fellowmen, even basic good manners cannot compete with the rush of superficial sights and sounds. In the words of AdBoard Chairman Raul Alvarez: "We are coming out with ads with the sole intention of making the consumer buy the product regardless of what methods are employed." This is where the AdBoard comes into the picture. Like Uncle Ben to the young Spider-man, the AdBoard is there to ensure that all those creative flights of fancy remain anchored to the basic values that define responsible advertising. Few industry outsiders know such an organization exists. So what is the AdBoard and what is its role in the industry? Created in 1974, the AdBoard, or Advertising Board of the Philippines, is a governing body composed of representatives of national organizations involved in media and advertising practice. These members have banded together to promote the development of the advertising industry through self-regulation, in harmony with industry goals.

As the umbrella organization of the advertising industry, the AdBoard is comprised of members from the following organizations: Philippine Association of National Advertisers (PANA), Association of Accredited Advertising Agencies (4As), Kapisanan ng mga Brodkaster ng Pilipinas (KBP), United Print Media Group (UPMG), Outdoor Advertising Association of the Philippines (OAAP), Advertising Suppliers Association of the Philippines (ASAP), Cinema Advertising Association of the Philippines (CAAP), Marketing and Opinion Research Society of the Philippines (MORES), and Independent Blocktimers Association of the Philippines (IBA).

The AdBoard adheres to a Code of Ethics, which commits the industry to the observance of truth in advertising, and to its social, economic and cultural responsibilities. For purposes of self-regulation, the AdBoard is guided by the Advertising Content Regulation Manual of Procedures (ACR) and the Standards of Trade Practices and Conduct (TPC) Manual. These contain regulations to keep advertising content within correct, ethical and wholesome bounds, and help to assure professional advertising practice. The Code and the Manuals are tools to upgrade the standards of advertising practice in the country. Advertisements for TV and radio are pre-screened by the AdBoard before airing. No ad material gets aired without AdBoard clearance. Further, superiority claims (e.g. number 1) and/or exclusivity (e.g. the only one) must be substantiated before clearance is granted. Print ads and billboards are also subject to post-screening. Any violation of the provisions of the Code of Ethics may become the subject of a complaint that is presented to the Advertising Content Regulation Committee (ACRC) for a hearing. Based on its findings, the ACRC may call for a Cease & Desist Order on errant ad materials.

Although mechanisms for self-regulation in the industry have long been in operation, the AdBoard management believes it is now time for a renaissance: a renewal of its commitment to uphold the integrity of the advertising industry, while at the same time protecting the right of the Filipino consumer to truthful advertising.

Just how it plans to achieve this renaissance can be gleaned from its new campaign "Paggalang sa Mamimili". Through this campaign, the AdBoard hopes to send the message that the industry recognizes its power to influence the public in a positive way and that it is going to take responsibility for this power through strengthened self-regulation.

"...comes great responsibility"

Today, more than ever, the burden of responsibility lies heavy on the shoulders of the AdBoard. Certain sectors of the industry are under fire because of their increased emphasis on materialism, sex, violence and sensationalism – factors that have contributed in no small way to the breakdown of moral values in modern society and the family. The AdBoard is on a crusade to revive values in advertising and media. AdBoard Chairman Raul Alvarez explains the need for a reawakening: "We are forgetting our responsibility to the public. We are a very powerful sector. If we misuse our power, it will affect the audience, especially the young people, negatively. We must take a look at this power and realize that we have a big responsibility, and we can use this power to influence the audience in a positive way."

The crusade has taken the form of an advocacy campaign "Paggalang sa Mamimili (Respect for the Consumer)". The campaign aims to reinforce that oft-forgotten commitment of the industry to its market. Respect for the consumer, according to Chairman Alvarez, means "you do not insult their intelligence, you do not mislead, you give them absolute truth in a creative way, you inform the consumer well so that they may make a wise decision."

The campaign involves a two-pronged approach: one internal, for practitioners in the advertising industry and media; and the other external, for the general public.

"The thrust of the internal campaign," according to Chairman Alvarez, "is to wake up the practitioners and tell them: What are we creative people for? Why do we have to use double meanings or jump on the sex bandwagon to sell our product?" At a symposium to launch the campaign on May 27, 2005, the AdBoard will remind industry practitioners of something many may have forgotten: "We all share the same values, which are truth and honesty, love for ourselves and our fellowmen, and of course love of country. We can use those values to sell our products." The other aspect of the "Paggalang sa Mamimili" campaign is targeted towards the consumer: to make them aware of the existence of the AdBoard, what it does in terms of self-regulation, what it is now aiming to do for the consumer. For the consumers, Chairman Alvarez has this to say: "We want them to know that the AdBoard does consider what is important to the consumer, and it is going to uphold what they value most: family, work, truth and honesty, and love for fellowmen and for country. We will not take them for granted, we will consider their values, their needs and wants, their attitudes, what is important to them."

"All these negative influences, you cannot do away with them. They're like temptation, sitting in the corner, lurking in the dark, waiting for you to make a mistake. That's why we have freedom of choice: if you don't like what's on TV, change channels; if you don't like what they're showing, turn it off, read a book. The only way to battle these negative influences is to make people realize that yes, we are concerned about them, make them realize that they have a choice, they can always choose not to watch." To make the campaign work, the AdBoard is pulling out the stops: beginning with a creative invitation to the symposium in the form of a mini sack of rice – to represent the consumer. "Paggalang will be the start of other campaigns to

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Senior Executive Officer
Jimenez-Basic Advertising

Treasurer
PACIENCIA M. PINEDA
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Manila Bulletin

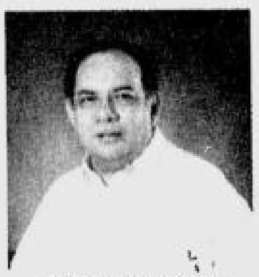

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Image Dimensions

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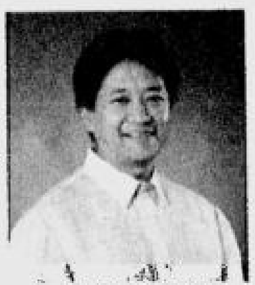
BBDO/Guerrero-Ortega



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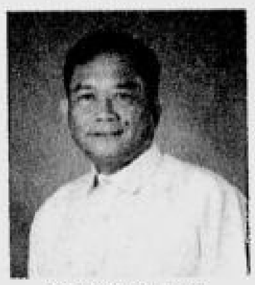

PEPITO R. OLARTE
VP-Advertising
Philippine Daily Inquirer

OSCAR T. VALENZUELA
Executive Director

Ex-Officio
SEC. CERGE M. REMONDE
Government Media Group
Malacañang Palace

DDB

HOW THE ADBOARD CAMPAIGN WAS BORN

"The first thing that came to our minds when we got the brief was to treat it as fun. Secondly, stop doing another preachy campaign, but one with a light tone and feel-good commercial, for a change. That was our mindset as soon as Adboard Chairman, Raul Alvarez talked to us", says Roger Pe, ECD of DDB Philippines who did the new Adboard print and tv campaign. "And knowing that we are talking to internal and external markets, we opted to take another executional route."

At the onset, Alvarez emphasized that time is ripe to create a campaign that would champion Adboard's mission: giving due respect to the consumers who buy our products 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. Several creative handles were thrown in, such as "Advertising Respects", "Respeto sa Mamimili" which finally evolved to, "Paggalang Sa Mamimili". Thus, a campaign line was decided on, a much-deserved battlecry that is as timely as today's headlines.

One storyboard and a day of howlingly hilarious shoot after, the material was wrapped up. A number of agency people and friends donated their precious time to do the bouncy, upbeat commercial for free. Art Directors, Copywriters, Producers, Casters, Account Executives, Secretaries and neighbors chipped in. Tess Jasareno, a freelan
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DDB Philippines, through it
Executive Officer Gil G. Ch
and Optima Production H

ce of Responsibility in Advertising

highlight the consumer," Chairman Alvarez promises. "After the launch of our mother campaign, it is up to our nine members to come up with their own campaigns. The AdBoard is even willing to assist in financing their campaigns."

The Paggalang sa Mamimili campaign is in line with a more active, reinvigorated AdBoard, set to be more aggressive in pursuing the goals of self-regulation with its new management. Chairman Alvarez suggests some of the steps the board may take in the future: "We will come out with a statement on our stand in various pressing issues. Programming content is not exactly under our control, but we plan to hold dialogues with parties concerned, such as MTRCB and the networks. We plan to review our Code of Ethics to minimize the gray areas and make them more clearly defined."

Sometime this June, the AdBoard Roadshow will do the rounds of the malls, schools and universities, the wet markets if need be, where they will promote their Paggalang sa Mamimili campaign within a compact display booth. Soon, those who have a complaint about a commercial or billboard can simply call a hotline, send a text message, or post their comments on the AdBoard website. All complaints are subject to a hearing with the Advertising Content Regulation Committee.

The challenge lies ahead for the AdBoard. To make this campaign work, the board knows that it has to be sustained. "Being advertising practitioners, ad campaigns are our specialty. So we follow the advertising process: an introductory stage, a sustaining stage, then if attention flags or fizzles out, there will be a re-launch."

With the support of its entire membership, the AdBoard knows it can make self-regulation work for the good of the industry, as well as become a significant influence in imparting positive values to the Filipino public.

Ads shine with Filipino values

Ads that portray the innate goodness of the Filipino and how he values life shine, not only among consumers, but within the industry as well. AdBoard, through its ARAW Values Awards, wants to make sure this practice remains in the years to come.

Over the years, advertising has evolved from hard selling to conscientious marketing. What remains constant is its inadvertent power to influence the way consumers form their values. Today, in the midst of a depressing economic and social state, the advertising industry faces a tremendous task of trying to help Filipino consumers keep a positive attitude.

It is during times like these when the Advertising Board of the Philippines (AdBoard) created ARAW Values Awards through its Values Promotion Committee. Through this form of recognition, AdBoard hopes to encourage more values-driven advertising in creative ways that consumers can easily relate to.

Now on its fifth edition, the ARAW Values Awards have produced notable advertising content that not only stirred consciousness among the locals, but gathered admiration from international award-giving bodies as well. Successful ads that won Araw Value Awards also won international accolades, adding more sources of pride for the Philippine advertising industry. Such materials were BBDO Guerrero Ortega's "More Than the Usual" for DOT; McCann-Erickson's "Punk" for Globe Handyphone; Hemisphere Leo-Burnett's "Lolo" for McDonald's; and DDB Philippines' "Stamp" for Teodora, winning a World Bronze Medal at the New York Festivals last year.

Earned a World Bronze Medal at the New York Festival, Teodora "Stamp" voices out the quintessential Pinoy was never meant to be a Mail-Order-Bride.

There are also those which are memorable to the local viewing public because of themes that come close to the people's hearts. Who can forget ads like Lowe Inc.'s "Balikbayan" TV ad for Petron, which popularized the expression "walang ganyan sa States."

The ad won the People's Choice category in 2004, obviously striking chords of patriotism among the common Pinoy. Other laudable ads touch on special emotions that uphold the important role of women in society. Thus, McCann Erickson's "Babae/Toga/Bahay" series for Modess merited the Special Citation for uplifting women's social status. Upholding moral values does not mean that brands will have to take a backseat in its advertising message. On the contrary, values-oriented ads give "soul" to the brand that helps consumers create a positive association between the brand and the value in their minds.

MALAYA banners a stark message against the immoral and inhuman practice of abortion

The ARAW Values Awards have determined certain categories that will identify and recognize local advertising materials that intend to advocate specific Filipino morals and values through creative executions. On top of these categories are seven cornerstone values which each candidate ad material may tackle: love of God and respect for religious beliefs; commitment to truth, honesty, and justice; love of country and respect for national customs and traditions; reverence for family unity and inviolability of marriage; respect and care for human life and dignity and the rights of all; respect for law and authority and the promotion of self-discipline; concern for and preservation of the environment.

The first category is referred to as Branded Communications. Under this category, ads directly sell or promote the brand while encouraging any of the ARAW cornerstone values. The second category is known as Advocacy, wherein ads contain messages that directly uphold any of the ARAW cornerstone values. Advocacy ads may also raise awareness on contemporary social issues. Corporate communications that exalt corporate values and ethical principles also fall under this category.

Once ad materials have been identified as qualifiers, they will be judged according to Value Message, Creative Excellence, and Credibility. Winners will be awarded with bronze, silver, and gold or platinum. Judges are composed of the country's top advertising creative directors, advertising agency heads, publication editors, marketing managers, media network creative personnel, and production house directors.

THE MONEY YOU BURN ON CIGARETTES CAN FIRE HIS DREAMS AGAIN.

A simple call to build new hopes, nurture new dreams and enkindle a flame of generosity to help Baseco Fire Victims.

AdBoard's Values Promotion Committee has the enviable yet overwhelming task of promoting basic Filipino values in line with AdBoard's commitment of social responsibility to the community, particularly the consuming public. Hopefully, through the ARAW Values Awards, AdBoard can make a difference in rallying its members to create ads that matter. These are ads that not only will shine during awards ceremonies, but also those that will carry the message of change that Filipinos need to make life better. Values-oriented ads, after all, inspire change.

The Consumer's Voice Needs To Be Heard

"The only thing necessary for the triumph of evil is for good men to do nothing"- Edmund Burke

The consumer's voice- your voice- is a power to reckon with. Collectively, it can affect the way a product or service is delivered to its rightful recipient. When weighed and carefully considered, consumer opinion can dictate market trends.

In the Philippines, such a voice is encouraged but rarely used and heard. While it's nice to know that "Consumer is King", the reality is that Filipino consumers are not often vocal about their disappointments and gripes about certain ads.

Adboard, therefore, gives you the venue to air your concerns on advertising materials that you see, hear, or watch everyday and everywhere. We enjoin you to bring back the consumer's voice by using us, the Adboard, as your medium. Let yourself be heard.

WE VALUE YOUR OPINION

For complaints, objections and comments on certain ads, please contact ADBOARD at the following :

Advertising Board of the Philippines

Suite 6A, Dao 1
Condominium 189
Salcedo Street,
Legaspi Village,
Makati City

Tel.Nos.
817-7724, 818-6113,
813-4398, 810-5138

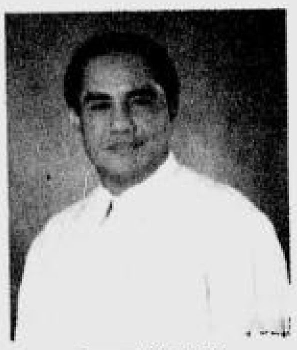
Fax No. 818-7109

Website:
www.adboard.com.ph

Paggalang
Sa Mamimili

ADBOARD

s & Board of Directors



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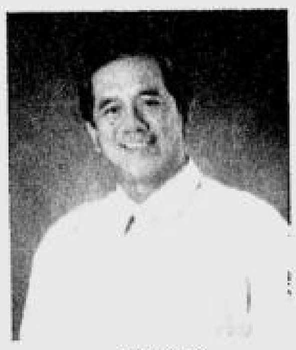
President
ASAP



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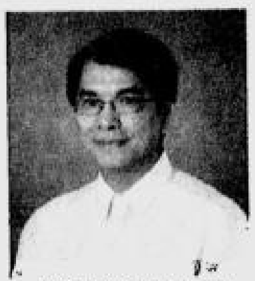
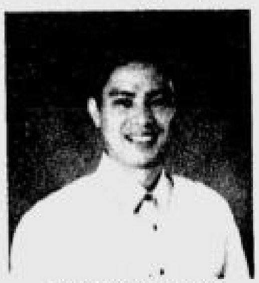
Alaska Milk Corporation



ATTY. GAFAR E. LUTIAN
Senior Legal Counsel
Procter & Gamble Phils.



EDGARDO G. SUNICO
Country Comm. Manager
Unilever Philippines, Inc

Today's advertising
says a lot about what we value as a society.

Thus, the AdBoard
embarks on a crusade to revive values in advertising and media.

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s Group President and Chief
ua, would like to thank Unitel
ouses for making the shoot, off-line, on-line editing and color-grading facilities all possible. Special mention should go to Tony Gloria, Abelle Serraon, Grace Quisias, Jenny Gapiz, Kim Pascual and Pete Jimenez, respectively. Many thanks also to Cecile Marino of Adboard, Oden Mateo, Denise Calimlim, Tina de Torres, Stephanie Lopez, Dusko Almosa, Tonio "John Regala" Villaluz, Inday, Heidy Enriquez, Joey Castillo and Julie de Joya of DDB Philippines, Hit Productions, PJ Lustresano, Norbel Pambid and Rolly Halagao, Noisy Neighbors Recording Studio, Green Apple Animax, Sockie Fernandez and Annette Eufemio of Brew Productions, and Calypso, Inc.

Maraming, maraming salamat po!

May Saya
Ang Mga Ngiti.

May Indak
Ang Mga Galaw.

May Kislap
Ang Mga Mata.

Pag May
Respeto
Sa Mamimili,
Lahat Ay Masaya.

ADBOARD

Paggalang Sa Mamimili.